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PREPARATION AND COMPETENCE OF INTENDING AND BEGINNING TEACHERS IN MALTA

Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

The transition from training to practice and the early years of their career have been considered to be a major influence on teachers' professional behaviour. This transition may be particularly difficult in Malta because of the lack of professional support provided to teachers in their beginning years of teaching.

The first section of the thesis traces the historical context of teacher education in Malta. A description of the Maltese system in the context of models of teacher education is followed by a review of the major issues in initial teacher education. The first years of teaching and the problems encountered by beginning teachers are discussed in the section dealing with the transition from training to practice. A case is made for the role played by perceptions of preparation and competence in teacher efficacy.

The second section of the thesis investigates the relationship between the training experience and teaching competence as viewed by intending and beginning teachers. The relationship between perceived levels of preparation and competence is determined through a survey conducted amongst the whole population of final year students and recent graduates of the B.Ed. (Hons) degree course run by the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta.

Teaching skills included in the survey are those which deal with the teaching of specific subject areas of the school curriculum, general teaching skills specific to the classroom situation and those which involve wider pastoral and interpersonal skills. The interplay between perceptions of preparation and competence for both student and beginning teachers is examined. The beginning teachers' competence in the teaching skills specific to the classroom situation and the teaching of the subject areas of the school curriculum is closely related to their preparation. Those skills which involve wider pastoral and interpersonal skills seem to stem more from their classroom experience than from the preparation they have received. Perceptions of preparation change with increasing experience, as does teachers' sense of competence in different aspects of the task. There was, however, little evidence for a 'Curve of Disenchantment'. A typology of the perceived competence of beginning teachers is identified.

In the third section of the thesis a small observational study of the recent graduates of the teacher education course who were teaching in Primary schools, is presented. It demonstrates that the typology of perceived competence of the larger survey work is useful in distinguishing between teachers with different patterns of teaching behaviour. This study showed that a high level of perceived competence was related to certain patterns of classroom behaviour known to foster achievement gains in pupils.

In the light of the findings on preparation and competence, suggestions for further research and for ways of supporting beginning teachers are put forward.

He who does not doubt, does not investigate, and he who does not investigate does not perceive, and he who does not perceive remains in blindness and error.

Al-Ghazali (1058-1111)

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PREFACE

ORIGINS OF THE STUDY

The origins of the present study are closely associated with my own professional development. Throughout the last few years I have been involved in initial teacher education at the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta. This Faculty of Education has been the only teacher training institution in the Maltese Islands for the last fifteen years. It offers a Bachelor in Education degree and a Master's in Education degree. It has also offered intermittently a Post Graduate Certificate in Education. The Bachelor of Education degree qualifies its recipients to teach at Primary, Secondary and Sixth-Form levels in the Maltese Islands. My role within the Faculty of Education, as tutor on the Bachelor of Education degree course, has brought me into close contact with student teachers and beginning teachers. Increasingly I have become mindful of the extent to which the Student Teachers on their teaching practice and beginning teachers felt that their present teaching competence in the various areas was related to their training. Most beginning teachers felt that their experience in the classroom was quite removed from what their training had purported to prepare them for. Some of my colleagues, the Teacher Educators themselves, would often comment on their return to the Faculty after they had been to a school visiting a student on teaching practice, that it seemed that the student in question had forgotten all that s/he had been told about teaching while on the course.

All along the way I have considered this issue of the relationship between perceptions of training and teaching competence in the classroom to be crucial to any teacher training institution that endeavoured to be effective. All this has led me to embark on the present study and to look more closely and thoroughly at the issues involved. It has also led me to seek in a systematic fashion the opinions of the main participants in teacher education and the induction of beginning teachers in Malta; namely student Teachers, beginning teachers, teacher educators and education officers. Hopefully, this will provide the basis for a consideration of where we are today and where we want to go in the future.

PART I INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION AND THE FIRST YEARS OF TEACHING

CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN MALTA

1.1 Education in Malta

The Maltese Islands in the Mediterranean Sea are made up of two main islands: Malta with a population of about 350,000 inhabitants and its sister island Gozo with a population of about 30,000. The Islands possess a very rich and colourful history dating back to prehistoric times. They were a British colony up to 1964. Until then, the economy of the Islands was based on the exigencies of the British colonial and military powers. Now Malta is an island-nation that has travelled all the way from Crown Colony status to self-Government (first in 1921 and then in 1947), full Independence in 1964 and Republican Status in 1974. It has very little known natural resources apart from its own people. The educational system in Malta is very much modelled on the English one in terms of levels. Malta's educational policies stem from a recognition of the fact that the economic and social well-being of the inhabitants depends entirely on human resources rather than on material ones and that a high standard of living can only be maintained and augmented through a heavy investment in education, training and technology. Unfortunately these national policies are still, to a large extent, not reflected in the curricula of the various levels of schooling. More recently there have been attempts to introduce, for example, the teaching of technology in both primary and secondary schools.

1.1.1 The Structure of the Maltese Educational System

The state school system in Malta is highly centralised and its policies are laid down by the Department of Education, which currently falls under the Ministry of Education and Human Resources. The various levels within the system are:

- Kindergartens (3-5 year olds)
- Primary schools (6-11 year olds)
- Secondary schools (11-16 year olds)
- Sixth-Form (16-18 year olds)

State schools admit children to kindergarten from the age of three years. Primary schooling is six years long and starts at the age of five years. Secondary schooling lasts five years and in the selective Junior Lyceums and comprehensive Secondary Schools pupils are generally prepared for the General Certificate of Education at Ordinary Level and the University of Malta Matriculation exams.

At the end of Form II secondary school pupils within the state school system who wish to learn a trade are transferred to a Trade School. Here the course is four years long and may lead to a further three years for the most successful candidates in an Extended Skills Training Scheme (ESTS) which is a form of apprenticeship at craft level.

The average class size is twenty-five at primary level and twenty at the secondary level. The languages of instruction are both Maltese and English. However, as one advances through the different levels, the language of instruction becomes increasingly English. This occurs for a number of reasons, among which can be numbered the easy availability of text-books in English and the dearth of text-books in Maltese, and the lack of a specialised terminology in Maltese in the various subject areas. About 30 per cent of the student population are catered for by the private sector. These schools are in the main run by the local Catholic Church and its various religious orders. In 1985, a political controversy arose over these schools as the then Labour government insisted that they offer free schooling. The private schools saw this as a threat to their existence

and autonomy. Now these schools receive a large subsidy from the Government that enables them to offer free schooling.

The National Minimum Curriculum issued in 1988 stipulates in very broad terms the basic required educational objectives to be achieved by both state and private schools. The state schools are issued with syllabi by the Department of Education that they are expected to follow and on which the national examinations are based. The pupils in state schools sit for mid-year school-based examinations and end-of-year national examinations starting from Year 4, that is at the age of eight. In these schools text-books, most of them dated and representing a foreign culture, are provided on a national basis. The private schools operate their own examination procedures and there is a larger variety in the selection of textbooks.

Post-secondary education in Malta takes the form of a state-run Upper Lyceum and private school Sixth forms which prepare students for the General Certificate of Education at Advanced level and the Advanced Matriculation exams of the University of Malta, with the view of entry to this University. A 'Higher Secondary School' provides an alternative route to post-secondary studies to those who do not obtain the minimum requirements for entry into the other institutions. Technical Institutes offer courses for intending technicians.

1.2 Teacher Education in Malta

The growth and development of education in Malta over the last few decades has been substantial and rapid. It has progressed from a system of compulsory attendance (introduced in 1924) to universal primary education in 1946 and universal secondary education in 1970, and the raising of the school leaving age to 16 in 1974. In the field of teacher education, the pre-service training of teachers was introduced as early as 1944. Teacher education, which used to be provided by the Department of Education, was transferred to Colleges of Education in 1945, a Department of Educational Studies within the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology in 1974, and to a Faculty of Education at the University of Malta in 1978.

As early as May 1849 Canon Pullicino who was the then Director of Elementary Schools introduced the practice of teaching a select group of pupils a different and more upgraded programme for their eventual employment in the educational system as pupil-teachers. He went on to prevail on teachers to enter into a contractual obligation (Department of Education, 1871) 'to give daily a separate and adequate instruction to a select class of youths of both sexes', from amongst whom, eventually, teachers for the elementary schools would be selected. This teacher-pupil system remained the only provision for the recruitment of teachers for over three decades. During one of his lectures in pedagogy Pullicino proclaimed:

> 'For the reform of popular education one thing is needed: and that is the teachers. They must be efficient teachers, however, whose teaching skills will make good for any lack of books, equipment and even pupil motivation'.
>
> (Pullicino, 1850)

In 1878, Patrick Keenan, since 1872 resident commissioner of the National Education Board of Ireland, was commissioned to investigate educational establishments in Malta. His report of 1879 did not find anything to praise in the Maltese system of elementary education. He reported that the schools were in chaos, teachers unqualified, teacher training non-existent and the education system utterly mismanaged. He observed that:

> Of training in the real sense as it is understood in Britain and Ireland, there is simply none. There is, to be sure, a rough and ready way, something in the shape of preparatory practice; but it is too rough and, even as practice, too incomplete to be dignified as training.
>
> (Keenan, 1879)

Keenan sought to improve the Maltese educational institutions through teacher-training in Britain, measures to ensure greater efficiency, and, preferably, compulsory elementary education {Hicks-Beach min., 7 Aug. 1878, intended for Keenan; 158/249} (Frendo, 1979). On his recommendations the best candidates for teaching began to be sent to England to take up courses in Colleges of Education there. For the improvement of teacher quality a Training School was set up in 1888. This system

that lasted for forty years was fed by teacher-trainees who had only a primary education background.

The 1920s marked a significant step in Malta's constitutional development. Malta was granted self-government by the British government with a constitution in 1921. Responsibilities for domestic affairs were assigned to the Maltese themselves. Education became the responsibility of a Minister and the subject of debate in Parliament. In the editorial of the November 1920 issue (vol.1, no. 9) of *The Teacher,* the organ of the Malta Union of Teachers, the following claims are made for the re-establishment of a Chair of Pedagogy at the University of Malta:

> 'We have no (teachers') Training College in Malta, but we have a good University; why not make use of this university for our teachers? As far back as 1850, there was a Class of Pedagogy at the University. We suggest that this Class be re-established and that degrees in Education be given. This is being done in several universities. The University of London that confers an MA. degree in Education and a Teacher's Diploma, has been asking for the views of the Teachers' Societies on the question of Pedagogy.'

At the sitting of the 23rd March 1922 of the Maltese Legislative Assembly the then prime minister Dr Enrico Mizzi took up the case of the teachers' union for the setting up of a Chair of Pedagogics at the University of Malta. He reminded the Assembly of the Notification of Government of 24th May 1850 that stated that: 'A university course for teachers was instituted in 1850 by Dr. Pullicino'. He went on to reiterate the proposed advantages that the Magisterial Union (teachers' union) had put forward for the setting up of the Chair. These were that this would enable every teacher to receive a university education and ensure that teaching is raised to a profession as the best brains would go in for teaching. The teacher training course would be made more complete and superior in that both English and Italian would be studied.

During that same sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the Hon. Mgr Ferris, the then Minister of Public Instruction, deplored the fact that the Training School programme consisted only of the 'school method' - discipline and teaching methodology. He drew attention to the fact that at the University of London, the teacher training programme consisted of: the principles of education, the history of education, special methodology and practical training. Mgr Ferris went on to announce that there were plans to teach history of education, science of education, logic and philosophy, besides the 'school

method'. He informed the Assembly that the proposal to establish a Chair of Pedagogy at the University had been submitted to the General Council of the University for examination.

A new Director of Education, Dr Laferla was appointed in 1924, whose overriding objective was to improve teacher education. On his appointment he found that:

> 'Many of the members of the teaching staff were not efficient ...but with very few negligible exceptions, they were and are all imbued with a spirit of duty.'
>
> (Department of Education, 1924)

He encouraged teachers first to obtain Junior Oxford and later Senior Oxford examination certificates, in addition to the post-primary form of education they were getting. This enabled him to justify claims for higher teacher salaries to the political authorities. However he was very authoritarian in his approach to teacher training. Camenzuli (1971) points out that,

> 'The teachers, in spite of their training, were turned into robots. There was one method and all teachers had to adopt it because another method definitely met with his disapproval and, consequently, financial hardship.'

This was a time when alternative employment was hard to come by. On the whole, however, teacher education and training improved considerably and as a consequence their status in the community was enhanced. Laferla (1930) had been concerned that the standard of teacher education:

> 'is not such as to enable a person to be an efficient teacher. Much ground must be covered before our teachers can be considered even fairly equipped for their onerous and responsible duties.'

Laferla's solution was to set up central schools to be followed by the Higher Central School in the 1920's. After the successful completion of the three year course, the students were employed as pupil teachers and required to attend the Training School on two half-days, for six hours a week, before they were given an appointment. There they were instructed in the methodologies of class control and discipline and subject teaching in general. Psychology was conspicuously absent. It was a kind of training aptly described by Pritchard (1988) as 'based on the personal experience of the

instructors, on what had worked for them, on intuition and common-sense in view of the conditions and class sizes their students would encounter in the schools'. Although Ellis (1943) found much to praise in the system devised by Laferla and considered it to be ' the system that is the best that could have been evolved at a time when the resources of the Island were too limited to warrant a more expensive scheme of training', he did not consider it sufficient for the teachers of the future. He recommended that their training 'must be more intensive, more advanced and more comprehensive'.

It was only after the recommendation of the Chief Adviser on Education to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that arrangements were made by the Director of Education to set up two Training Colleges run by Religious Orders in 1947. At this stage higher standards were being required for entry into teacher training. Courses were eventually extended first to two, then to three years, with certification being recognised by the University of London Institute of Education. In 1978, a Faculty of Education was established at the University of Malta and B.Ed.(Hons) and PGCE courses were offered.

1.2.1 Teacher Education at the University of Malta

The University of Malta was set up in 1592 by the Jesuit Order, although the campus that it now occupies was completed in 1964. The Faculty of Education at the University of Malta is the youngest of the faculties at one of the oldest universities in the Mediterranean. The present Faculty was set up in 1978 to replace the then existing two teacher training colleges, one for men and another for women, both of which were run by religious orders. Since its founding the Faculty's major role has been that of providing pre-service teacher education in Malta. This it has done in the form of the B.Ed.(Hons) course, currently a full-time four year honours degree programme that prepares intending teachers for a dual primary/ secondary school teaching qualification. In fact it is the only institution on the island that is concerned with the pre-service education of intending teachers. A Post-Graduate Certificate in Education that was interrupted in 1981 was reintroduced in 1988. More recently the Faculty has begun to

offer an M.Ed. course and a number of diploma and in-service courses. It has a student body of about 400 out of 3,000 students in all.

At the outset the main components of the then B.A.(Education) degree course were: educational theory, educational practice, arts in education and physical and life sciences in education, following the model then current in the United Kingdom. Already by then external examiners were being brought in from the United Kingdom. Until recently, teacher education in Malta has been influenced by developments in teacher education in the United Kingdom. The main reason for this was that the large majority of its lecturing staff had been trained in the United Kingdom or other English-speaking Commonwealth countries like Canada and New Zealand. However with Malta's application for membership into the European Economic Community in 1989 there is an increasing interest by the Faculty in the teacher education models that are currently being adopted by other European countries.

The prospectus of the BA (Education) degree course was formally accepted in May 1979 and the assessment procedures were established at the same time. These consisted of course work, final examination, teaching practice and dissertation. In that year the Faculty of Education organised a Symposium on Teacher Trends in Education. The aims of this symposium were to:

a) establish formal contacts between educators in Malta,
b) make known to the general public how the Faculty of Education is trying to fulfil its major function of promoting the teaching profession in Malta, primarily through the BA. (Education) course,
c) to launch the first major public academic function of the Faculty with the hope that similar functions will follow.

In 1979, the four year BA. (Education) degree course was extended to five years and set out on the basis of five (five and a half month) study semesters alternating with five (five and a half month) work-phases. Also then the admission requirements for the BA.(Education) course were established.

1.3 Relations between the Faculty of Education (University) and the Department of Education (Ministry).

Relations between the Faculty of Education and the Department of Education of the Ministry of Education have been very much of a forced co-existence. Teacher education had been transferred from the Department to the teacher-training colleges and then to the Faculty in 1978. Over the years the large majority of the lecturing staff at the Faculty of Education have been former employees of the Department. As a result of this the Department has experienced a 'brain drain' from within its ranks to the Faculty. In many cases, individuals who had been sent abroad for post-graduate studies on Departmental scholarships sought employment with the Faculty on their return to the island. The general feeling has been that the Department, because of its highly centralised administration and top-down management organisation, does not offer opportunities for further academic and professional development. A situation evolved where individuals began to feel that they owed their allegiance to two distinct institutions. This has been accentuated by the specific characteristics of a small-island nation where everybody is well known, especially if one works within the same field. On the official level relations seem to be positive with even a joint committee, formed by members from both sides, meeting on a regular basis. However few attempts have been made for a fuller collaboration, and the instances where these have been successful are rare.

Notwithstanding all this, the need for heightened collaboration between the Faculty and the Department of Education was already being recognised, albeit at a strictly organisational level. At a staff seminar of the Faculty of Education, held on 19th November 1979 and entitled: 'Teaching Practice: An Appraisal', the following statement was issued:

> ' The Faculty does not allocate the students to their place of work, and consequently the students' aptitudes may not necessarily be compatible with their assigned classes. This does not mean that a system cannot be evolved between the Faculty and the Personnel Section of the Department of Education to co-ordinate the best possible combination between student and class.....We cannot possibly prepare students for all the subjects they may be required to teach and all eventualities they are likely to encounter in the schools; consequently we can only stress 'principles' and offer 'models' and at the same time train students to 'make connections' or transfer the

concepts developed, and the approaches analysed at University to tackle situations as they may arise in the classroom. Besides the practical necessity, such an approach helps students become independent and autonomous in the classroom.'

At this seminar concern was shown about the relevance of the theoretical to the practical aspects of the course. Ways of introducing a greater element of practical experiences, other than the conventional teaching practice were being sought. The importance of in-service training was reiterated. However for many years the collaboration between the Faculty of Education and Department of Education remained only at the level of the Department posting the students from the Faculty on their teaching practice into the state schools. The centralised state schooling system required that the Faculty relied entirely on the Department for the posting of Student Teachers on their Teaching Practice. In the main, the Department still regards Teaching Practice as a 'teaching' post rather than a training one. It is only during these last few years that a very small number of Student Teachers now undertake their Teaching Practice in private schools. As these schools are independent the student teachers are in a better position to negotiate their teaching duties with the head of school concerned.

1.4 The Student-Worker Scheme

In June 1981 the B.A.(Educ) degree was renamed B.Ed.(Hons). In December of that year the Early and Middle Years component was introduced as an area of specialisation. In March 1991 the Faculty of Education was restructured to incorporate the following departments: Primary Education, Arts in Education, Science and Technology in Education, Foundations in Education and Psychology. Forming part of the only university on the island, which although officially possessing an autonomous status is funded in the main by the government, has meant that the general policies of the Faculty have been very much determined by the government of the day. Unlike what has happened in the United Kingdom, changes in teacher education in Malta, apart from those instigated by Keenan in 1878 and Laferla in the 1920's have not in the main been related to criticisms of the schools. The major changes in teacher education that have taken place throughout these two decades have been the result of the two main political parties' outlook on the role of tertiary education.

In 1979 the then Maltese Labour government introduced the student-worker scheme at the University. The courses at the University were all set out on the basis of five and a half month study semesters alternating with five and a half month work-phases. The implications of this for the B.Ed.(Hons) degree were that in each year the student-teachers were at the university for five and a half months and on work phase for another five and a half months. The workphase took place within a real work environment and was sponsored by various government departments, parastatal and private companies. The student-workers received a stipend from their employer/sponsor all year round. To avoid the University being completely deserted for half of the year and overloaded for the other half, the students were divided into two groups. One group went to university to start off with and the other started out on a work phase. The Faculties of Arts and Sciences were suppressed and their staff incorporated within the Faculty of Education. This political move created much bad blood between the members of staff of the various Faculties.

The student-worker scheme had been introduced by the Government without any wide consultation with the parties involved. It, thus, received wide negative criticism in the press from various sectors of the Maltese society. When the Nationalist party came to government in 1987 the student-worker scheme was scrapped and the Faculties of Arts and Science were revived. The B.Ed.(Hons) degree course switched to a regular academic four-year programme with five-week sessions of teaching practice per year for each student. The Post Graduate Certificate in Education course that had been interrupted in 1981 was re-introduced.

1.5 The Current Situation

At the current time the Faculty of Education offers a B.Ed.(Hons) degree course that makes Student Teachers eligible to teach at both primary and secondary levels. More recently it has been possible for students to specialise in primary school teaching for part of their training. New entrants into the course are expected to specialise in two teaching areas, besides the common core of educational studies. The first teaching area is a subject, which is to be taught at secondary school level. The second teaching area is either another subject that is related to the first area or an area identified as Early and

Middle Years that deals with teaching in the primary sector. These teaching areas deal with both the content and the teaching methodology of the subjects in question. The other main components of the course are Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology and History of Education. There is also the possibility for students to specialise in Early Childhood Education, although this is geared more towards the early primary years as no B.Ed.(Hons) graduates are normally designated to the kindergarten sector.

In their first year the students follow a programme: 'Introduction to School Experience' that culminates in a five-week teaching practice session in the second term. In the ensuing years the students carry out five-week teaching sessions, either before Christmas or before Easter. For many years the teaching practice sessions were monitored and assessed solely by the Faculty of Education tutors. More recently 'mentor schemes' which require a greater involvement by the schools are being experimented with.

A substantial number of untrained teachers (casual) are recruited every year within the Maltese educational system to cope with the shortage of trained teachers. Also graduates with a master's or doctoral degree may enter teaching without training.

CHAPTER TWO

INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION AND THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

2.1 Paradigms and Models of Teacher Education

A paradigm in teacher education can be thought of as a matrix of beliefs and assumptions about the nature and purposes of schooling, teaching, teachers and their education that gives shape to specific forms of practice in teacher education (Popkewitz *et al.*, 1979). There seem to be at least four paradigms that have dominated the discourse of debate in teacher education in recent years: 'behaviouristic' teacher education, 'personalistic' teacher education, 'traditional-craft' teacher education, and 'inquiry-oriented' teacher education (Zeichner, 1983a).

2.1.1 Behaviouristic Teacher Education

Behaviouristic Teacher Education rests upon the foundations of a positivistic epistemology and behaviourist psychology and emphasises the development of specific and observable skills of teaching which are assumed to be related to pupil learning. The knowledge, skills and competencies to be taught to prospective teachers are those that are felt to be the most relevant to the teaching role as currently defined. The criteria by which success is to be measured are made explicit and performance at a pre-specified level of mastery is assumed to be the most valid measure of teacher competence.

Competency - Based Approaches

Competency-based approaches to teacher education were popular in the USA in the 1970's and were introduced in the UK in the early 1980's (Tuxworth, 1982). In the UK critiques of traditional approaches to initial teacher education have led to increased demands that it be school-based and more directly linked to the competencies required of the beginning teacher (Whitty & Willmott, 1991).

Promoters of competency-based approaches to teacher education have been accused of an over-emphasis on skills and techniques. However, it has also been argued that an 'inquiry-oriented' approach can be expressed in competence terms. Technical competence in teaching, when viewed as an end in itself apart from its ability to promote student understanding, is not synonymous with technical competence that is sensitive to and builds upon student understandings (MacKinnon and Erickson, 1988). There is no agreement about the meaning of competencies, even less about the specific competencies that should be promoted by initial teacher education and in-service courses. Some characterise competence as an ability to perform a clearly defined task satisfactorily. Others characterise competence as wider than this, encompassing cognitive and attitudinal dimensions, as well as performance.

Some teacher education course teams have based only parts of the course, like school experience, on a competency-based approach, especially where a narrow definition of competence is in operation. Those operating with a broader definition of competence have tried to adopt a competency-based approach to a whole course.

2.1.2 Personalistic Teacher Education

Personalistic Teacher Education rests upon the foundations of a phenomenological epistemology and perceptual and developmental psychologies. It is based upon the principles of 'open education' (Crook, 1974) and subsumes such additional strategies as 'Humanistic Teacher Education' (Combs *et al.*, 1974). Its proponents seek to promote the psychological maturity of prospective teachers and emphasise the reorganisation of perceptions and beliefs over the mastery of specific behaviours, skills

and content knowledge. The behaviours of teachers and the environment they create are assumed to result largely from the particular meanings and purposes of teachers. The specification of a particular set of behaviours for all teachers to master is viewed as antithetical to the development of mature and competent teachers.

According to this view teacher education is a form of adult development, a process of 'becoming a teacher' rather than merely a process of educating someone how to teach. Competence in teaching is equated with psychological maturity. Student Teachers are viewed as active agents in determining the substance of their own professional education within a supportive learning environment.

2.1.3 Traditional-Craft Teacher Education

Within this approach teacher education is seen very much as a process of apprenticeship. Knowledge about teaching is accumulated largely by trial and error and is to be found in the 'wisdom of experienced practitioners' (Floden & Lanier, 1979). It is assumed that much of this accumulated knowledge is tacit and not amenable to the kind of specification that is attempted in 'behaviouristic' approaches. A master-apprentice relationship is seen as the proper vehicle for transmitting the 'cultural knowledge' possessed by good teachers to the novice. Intending teachers are viewed largely as passive recipients of this knowledge and play little part in determining the substance and direction of their teacher education courses.

2.1.4 Inquiry-Oriented Teacher Education

In describing the classroom lives of teachers Jackson (1968) presented a vision of a social environment whose intensity, complexity and insistent demands for rapid response seemed to leave little room for deliberation. That might come later, looking back at what happened and forward to what might be encouraged to happen next and would be desirable in the teacher's view. An important development in teacher education has been the emergence of the 'reflective practitioner'. The notion of the

reflective practitioner has been inspired by the work of teacher educators such as Cruickshank (1987) who has drawn extensively upon Dewey (1933). Schon (1983, 1987, 1989) has challenged the dominant technical rationality in professional education and has argued for more attention to promoting artistry in teaching by encouraging 'reflection in action' and 'reflection on action' among teachers. Zeichner and Tabachnick (1991) agree with Cruickshank and Schon that thoughtful teachers who reflect about their practice (on and in action) are more desirable than thoughtless teachers, who are ruled primarily by tradition. However, Zeichner and Tabachnick feel that Cruickshank and Schon leave a lot unsaid in terms of what teachers ought to be reflecting about, the kinds of criteria that should come into play during the process of reflection or about the degree to which teachers' deliberations should incorporate a critique of the institutional contexts in which they work. Zeichner and Tabachnick call for the establishment of clear priorities for the reflections that emerge out of a reasoned educational and social philosophy.

Educators from a broad range of ideological persuasions have embraced the term 'reflective teaching'. Zeichner and Liston (1990) have identified four varieties of reflective teaching practice based on their analysis of traditions of reform in twentieth-century US teacher education:

> 1) an academic version that stresses reflection upon subject matter and the representation and translation of subject matter knowledge to promote student understanding (Shulman, 1987);
>
> 2) a social efficiency version that emphasises the thoughtful application of particular teaching strategies that have been suggested by research on teaching (Ross and Kyle, 1987);
>
> 3) a developmentalist version that prioritises teaching that is sensitive to students' interests, thinking and patterns of developmental growth (Duckworth, 1987), and
>
> 4) a social reconstructionist version that stresses reflection about the social and political context of schooling and the assessment of classroom actions for their ability to contribute to greater equity, social justice and humane conditions in schooling and society (Beyer, 1988; Maher and Rathbone, 1986).

In each of the above views of reflective teaching identified by Zeichner and Liston, certain priorities are established about schooling and society that emerge out of

particular historical traditions and educational and social philosophies. These traditions are not mutually exclusive.

The preparation of university students to become reflective practitioners presents us with some difficulty. Reflection is considered to be a private activity, while reflective teaching, like any kind of teaching, is expected to be a public activity. Reflection, even when it is conceived to be a private activity, may have public consequences as people say and do things we can observe as being a result of reflection. In this view thought and action are connected but are presented separately from one another.

An alternative view (Mead, 1938) presents thinking and doing as inseparable parts of an act. It is not only thinking that leads to and shapes the behaviour of the wise actor, but that person's behaviour, within a particular social context, can also lead to and shape thinking. Thought and behaviour become a duality; interactive and interdependent.

Zeichner and Tabachnick (1991) describe reflective teaching in the following manner:

> 'Reflective teaching, like any teaching, is a social activity. Either reflective teaching looks back at social interactions and tries to make sense of them in order to plan for future teaching, or it looks forward to social interactions of teaching and learning that have not yet taken place and attempts to shape these, or reflective teaching is within the process of teaching and learning, in which ideas and behaviour interact to shape one another. Meanings for the results of teaching and learning are grounded in and confirmed by social relations within a particular context.' (p.11)

The view of Kemmis (1985) about the social character of reflection as a part of teaching is an activist one. Teaching itself always has some effect in terms of enhancing the life chances of students or of maintaining existing constraints to students' access to opportunity. Kemmis identifies reflection as value-laden, expressing and serving:

> 'particular human, social, cultural and political interests...it actively reproduces or transforms the ideological practices which are the basis of the social order...(and) expresses our power to reconstitute social life by the way we participate in communication, decision-making and social action' (p.149)

Berlak and Berlak (1981) summarise in the following manner the basic tenets of an inquiry-based approach to teacher education:

'The proper role of the formal education of teachers is to help persons develop their capacities to see their classroom behaviour in the perspective of culture and time, from the point of view of historical and contemporary others, thereby clarifying for themselves and others the alternatives for action. The structural features of institutions for the education of teachers, including staffing policies, selection of knowledge, arrangement of learning environments and pedagogical strategies of the instructors, are means towards this end. The entire programme, all courses and practical experiences, should provide the aspiring and experienced teacher with access to persons who can help initiate and sustain a process of critical inquiry.' (p.252)

Each of the above orientations to teacher education is in itself very diverse. They are often not viewed to be synonymous with a specific course or institution. In fact a single course may incorporate elements from two or more general orientations. The identification of general orientations to teacher education is intended merely to convey the priorities within each approach. All orientations are concerned in some way with mastery of content knowledge, technical skill in teaching, the reorganisation of teacher perceptions and with fostering some form of inquiry about teaching. It is the set of priorities that each orientation emphasises which distinguishes one approach from the other.

2.1.5 Dimensions of Teacher Education

Zeichner & Tabachnick (1983) have summarised the paradigms by describing two of the most salient dimensions along which one can distinguish one conception of teacher education from the other.

Figure 2.1 A Summary of Four Paradigms of Teacher Education

(from Zeichner, 1983)

In his review of the teacher education reforms in the West, Bush (1987) concluded that no fundamental reforms in teacher education had taken place since the 1930s. There were few changes in the way students are taught and in the teachers' workplace. Teacher education in itself was beset with problems of faulty design, diffusion of control and insufficient resources. More attention needed to be given to beginning teachers and the problems they encountered because of the lack of an adequate knowledge base. Bush recommended that the best experience and practice that exist in schools be codified and made widely available. Schools and institutions of higher education were to be brought closer together in order to begin using the technology of teaching, with emphasis on both effectiveness and efficiency. Teacher education was to move towards more controlled and naturalistic experimentation. In many ways these proposals adumbrated the recent moves to school-based training in England.

Taking a rather different solution, Wragg (1987) calls for a fresh round of recruitment of staff to training institutions in the United Kingdom; public funding for major

curriculum development in teacher education; partnership between schools and training institutions, and a salary and career structure that will attract the best recruits. To reduce 'reality shock' Weinstein (1988) recommended that teacher education courses be increased in length, rigour and selectivity. They were to 'eschew simple lists of *shoulds* and *recipes* for success' and Student Teachers were to be provided with opportunities for 'social comparison' to allow them to examine the relevance of teaching practice for their current teaching.

Gore (1987) presents a modified version of Cruickshank's 1985 reflective teaching approach. He intends it to be substituted for the traditional teaching practice experiences for the benefit of Student Teachers. Harber & Meighan (1989) came up with the Democratic Learning Co-operative Model that allowed PGCE students at Birmingham University the opportunity to decide as a group what and how they should learn. This applied to the Methods part of the course in which the Student Teachers could write their own syllabus, select their teaching materials, share the tasks of teaching, organise course sessions, locate appropriate resources and evaluate the outcomes. The main objective of this model was to allow students to gain confidence for their forthcoming teaching practice.

McQualter (1985) developed on the basis of personal construct theory (Kelly, 1955) a procedure to assist student teachers to explore their own mental worlds. It offers student teachers and their supervisors the opportunity to discuss and examine the various dimensions of teaching within a counselling situation. Student teachers were asked to reconsider their personal construct systems on teaching.

Lawton (1990) concluded that political, educational and demographic trends were causing fundamental changes in teacher education in the United Kingdom. He proposed a three-stage process of teacher education: a shorter, more intensive and competence-oriented initial teacher education; an induction/probation stage with an emphasis upon reflection on practice; and a third stage that would focus upon professional concerns, covering more intensive and extensive work in the areas of philosophy, psychology and sociology.

Weinstein (1988, p.23) warned against the establishment of a 'false perception of control' of the situations anticipated in future teaching. In the case of Malta, Teaching

Practice has been considered to be (both within the current framework of four sessions of five weeks each and even more so within the framework of the student-worker scheme) very much an immersion into a situation as much like regular teaching as possible. Any support provided by the school to the student teacher is very much incidental and on a voluntary basis. In fact it has often been the case that Teaching Practice has been viewed to be generally much more difficult than teaching on a full-time basis. During Teaching Practice one is expected to take over a class for five weeks. There is no induction period or time to get to know the school or the pupils well. The Student Teachers are only informed of their Teaching Practice posting a few days before they are due to start. When one starts teaching on a regular basis there is more opportunity to familiarise oneself with one's own classroom situation and to be able to prepare tasks that match the abilities of one' s pupils.

In Britain, the 1983 white paper *Teaching Quality* and the issuing of Department of Education and Science (DES) circular 3/84 led to the establishment of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) which was to advise the secretary of state on the professional accreditation of initial teacher education courses (DES, 1984). The criteria imposed by CATE embrace selection procedures, planning strategies, the length of time to be devoted to subject study and to practice in schools, the content and duration of professional elements and the updating of school-teaching experience by those responsible for such elements. Academic validation of courses, which remained in the hands of universities and the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), became clearly separated from the assessment of the suitability of courses to give their graduates qualified teacher status (QTS). Similar bodies, like the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education in the USA, are to be found in other countries (Gammage, 1992). However, these tend to operate more on 'a free to join in basis' as far as the teacher education institutions are concerned than is the case in Britain. Now in 1994 the British Government proposes to establish a teacher training agency which will be set up under the new Education Bill. This agency will be responsible for checking the quality of training in both universities and schools. It will also have control over the funds. Under the changes, schools are being asked not only to provide classrooms in which trainees can try out their teaching skills but also trained staff to act as mentors for the intending teachers. Until a couple of years ago this latter task would have been the responsibility of university education departments. Postgraduate trainee teachers used to spend two thirds of their time in university learning about the

foundations of education and one third observing or on teaching practice in schools. Now the proportions are being reversed. The new partnerships between schools and universities have to be in place by September 1994. CATE increased the government's capacity to control directly teacher education by scrutinising courses of initial teacher education according to criteria set out by central government. The Teacher Training Agency is meant to take away most of the responsibility for teacher education from higher education institutions and place it within schools.

2.1.6 Curriculum Structure and Orientation of the Maltese B.Ed.(Hons) Course

The Maltese teacher training course will be described in the context of the models of teacher training presented above.

The components of the Maltese B.Ed.(Hons) course are:

1) Foundations in Education (which include Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology and History of Education) [12 modules],
2) Pedagogy [6 modules]
2) Teaching Area I (a subject taught at secondary level) [15 modules]
3) Teaching Area II (a subject taught at secondary school or the Early and Middle Years Component which deals with primary education)[11 modules],
4) Teaching Practice (a five-week session in every year of the course)
5) Dissertation (which represents an extended project in the field of education or the Teaching Areas).

The B.Ed.(Hons) course currently contains eight academic semesters, one school induction term and four teaching practice sessions of five weeks each, spread over a four-year course.

Four major areas, namely Foundations in Education, Pedagogy, Teaching Area I and Teaching Area II make up the academic programme, which consists of 41 modules, each normally of 32 hours duration. Students are required to work on the dissertation

throughout the course. Each module is assessed through one or a combination of these methods: set essays, seminar presentations, submission of reports. laboratory work, tests, or end-of-year examinations. The lecturers in the respective areas of specialisation have considerable autonomy in determining the mode of assessment for their specific area. However, the Faculty of Education Board of Studies monitors all the procedures in order to ensure high quality and balance.

The B.Ed.(Hons) course leads to an honours degree of the University of Malta which is classified as First Class, Second Class (Lower and Upper Division) and Third Class. The class achieved depends on the grades obtained in the course modules which make up the academic programme, Teaching Practice, the dissertation and final examinations.

It is very hard to identify the overriding 'philosophy' which has guided teacher education in Malta as provided by the Faculty of Education. This is because the specific orientations taken by different Teacher Educators have varied according to their own set of beliefs which have often been influenced by the specific school of thought in their area of specialisation predominant at the foreign institution of higher education where they had recently followed their post-graduate studies. Similarly, as with lecturers in other faculties of the University of Malta, those of the Faculty of Education tend to have followed or are currently following post-graduate studies in foreign institutions of higher education. This is especially the case for those who pursue studies in Education as this is a field which is fairly new to the University. Invariably this situation has had a great effect on the way in which particular components are taught. Bearing in mind that this is the University of a small island it is often the case that one or two people are the only university specialists in that particular field. The implications of this are that these specialists are in a position to influence completely the way in which their particular field of specialisation is oriented. One can detect a behaviourist orientation to the teaching of Psychology of Education, a Marxist perspective to that of Sociology of Education and a liberal orientation to that of Philosophy of Education.

All in all, it can be stated that the overriding paradigm for the Maltese B.Ed.(Hons) has been very much a behaviouristic one, resting upon the foundations of a positivistic epistemology and behaviourist psychology. It emphasises the development of specific and observable skills of teaching which are assumed to be related to pupil learning.

Over the years some 'progressive individuals' have made attempts to render parts of the course more inquiry-oriented. However, these attempts have remained very specific to certain parts of the course for which these individuals have special responsibilities and have not as yet been adopted for all of the course.

2.2 The 'Theory/Practice' Rift in Teacher Education

The relationship between theory and practice has been one of the recurrent issues in teacher education (Webster, 1978; Sutton *et al.*, 1975; Rowell *et al.*, 1992). Some teacher educators have remained in favour of strengthening the theoretical aspects of teacher training courses to produce teachers who are educated as well as proficient (Simon, 1976). Alternatively, others have argued for extending the role and importance of school experience in response to the increasing dissatisfaction with the way that the traditional teaching practice approach has divorced the university course content from the classroom situation. Webster (1987) suggests that attempts to link theory and practice have usually begun with a reform of theory: an attempt to link the various foundation disciplines, or the foundation disciplines with the method courses, or to find illustrative examples that are of relevance to the school teacher. He argues that to achieve this link there would have to be fundamental changes in the content and organisation of both teaching practice and in-service training that would bring about the development of an intense and many-sided relationship between subject specialists within departments of education and the teachers in the schools. This would also involve a radical change in the power structure of teacher training. It is interesting to note that currently in England there are attempts by the government to shift the responsibility for teacher training from the universities to the schools but with overall control to be in the hands of a teacher training agency to be set up by the government.

Both Stones (1979, 1981, 1983) and Wilson (1975, 1982, 1983) have regularly addressed the 'theory/practice' issue in their numerous probing explorations of the field of educational studies. Many others have taken up the issue from the perspective of critical social theory. These include Gitlin & Teitelbaum (1983), Zeichner (1983b, 1990) and Giroux & McLaren (1993). Stones' (1983) criticisms of the 'theory/practice' rift in teacher education are three-fold:

(1) the 'theoretical' content of the courses,
(2) the methods of teaching and learning on the courses, and
(3) the nature of the relationship between schools and the education departments in centres of higher education.

Stones argues for a shift away from 'attempts at encyclopaedic coverage of educational theory' and for a more deliberate focus on issues directly related to effective pedagogy. This shift, he claims, would have important consequences for his second area of concern, the methods of teaching and learning employed in the preparation of teachers. It would remove the emphasis from a transmission style to a more participatory style of teaching and learning for both staff and students in centres of teacher education. In Stones' view the chief obstacles to such participatory learning becoming the normal pattern in the preparation of teachers lie in established institutional practices and in the diverging attitudes to teacher preparation, between schools on the one hand, and centres of teacher education on the other. Stones (1983) describes this state of affairs, thus:

> 'Both institutional structures and psychological attitudes conspire to tear students in two. The schools, treating them like surrogate teachers, give them a programme as much like a 'real teacher's' as possible; while the training institutions give a very limited school-related theory but eventually pass judgement on the students in the final assessment ritual.' (p. 81)

Two sorts of causes of the persistence of the theory-practice problem suggest themselves. One is that the various solutions have been inappropriate. The other is that the 'problem' itself has been incorrectly defined in the first place: a perfectly feasible diagnosis, since the 'theory-practice problem' is itself only another theoretical construct.

The dominant view of theory has been of its constituting a set of propositions about children, teachers, educational processes and contexts. Such propositions are validated by (1) the methodology of social sciences, particularly the positivistic tradition within that methodological spectrum; and (2) their origin, predominantly, in the institutions that define themselves and are publicly defined as existing to create and disseminate such propositional knowledge.

By the late 1970s solutions more fundamental than 'integration' were being explored. The first was the generation of a new professional theory grounded in the close analysis

of classroom practice which by then had become a significant strand in educational research. Hirst (1979) and McIntyre (1980) were among those who argued that this aspiration was doomed to failure: 'There is not, and cannot be, any systematic corpus of theoretical knowledge from which prescriptive principles for teaching can be generated' (McIntyre 1980, p.296). Hirst's alternative was eclecticism - 'raiding the disciplines' as he termed it (1979) - in pursuit of whatever insights were available. McNamara and Desforges (1978) attempted to codify the 'craft knowledge' of serving teachers to use it as a basis for initial training. Such codification was not successful: the explication of the thinking behind professional practice at a deeper level than the standard familiar tips was something teachers found difficult.

McIntyre's (1980) analysis was grounded in a Popperian view of educational research, which contrasted with the explicit (or more often tacit and unrecognised) positivism underpinning the mainstream teacher education view of theory/practice. He argued that learning to teach must be a continual process of hypothesis-testing framed by detailed analysis of the values and practical constraints fundamental to teaching. The 'theory' for teacher education should therefore incorporate (1) speculative theory, (2) the findings of empirical research, (3) the craft knowledge of practising teachers, but none should be presented as having prescriptive implications for practice: instead, students should be encouraged to approach their own practice with the intention of testing hypothetical principles drawn from the consideration of these different types of knowledge. To aid this process, researchers would need to shift their emphasis to practitioners' concerns that would be identified on the basis of dialogue, participant observation and action research. This view of the student teacher, not as the recipient of recipe theory but as the active agent in the construction of his or her own professional theory, complements the 'teacher as researcher' and school-based INSET principles invoked by Stenhouse (1975) as an alternative basis for subsequent professional development to 'going on a course'.

The theory-practice issue in teacher education remains problematic. Too often 'theory' is assumed to mean a relatively fixed body of knowledge derived either in a discipline-related way or thematically from the psychology, philosophy, sociology and history of education and the problem becomes one of finding new and more 'relevant' ways of reorganising and presenting this 'given' theory rather than one of asking the more fundamental question 'What sort of theoretical basis for classroom practice - if any -

does the beginning teacher need?' Thus the possibility that rather different notions of a theory for teaching may be worth considering is ignored and course renewal becomes a process of merely re-jigging existing content.

The analysis of the theory-practice relationship is emphasised in the publication of the report of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers on the PGCE route to secondary teaching (UCET 1979):

> ' Above all this document is aimed at promoting greater partnership at a fundamental level between schools and training institutions. In many ways the nature of professional training is slowly being transformed. It is perhaps not too much to claim that it is now possible for training to become truly 'professional' for the first time. That is being achieved in practice only where theory and practice are being effectively linked and where there is the closest collaboration of teachers and tutors in the planning and teaching of the course. It is that development above all that is being sought'.
>
> (UCET 1979, p 17)

2.2.1 Implications for Student Teachers

Student Teachers are 'torn apart' by the conflicting priorities of the schools and the academies of teacher education. First, there is the continual anxiety, while on teaching practice, generated by the need to be a success in the classroom and to be accepted in the staff room; or at least, not to make a mess of things in the classroom and thus be a pitiful figure in the staff room. Secondly, there is the periodic anxiety, which invariably increases as the school and college year progresses, about the expectations of one's supervisors - which might often simply not be achievable in one's school. Thirdly, there are anxieties about the assessments and examinations in the theoretical areas of the course, which may sometimes seem quite remote from one's classroom concerns but which nevertheless loom ominously as examinations or assessment deadlines draw close.

Student Teachers are bi-located in settings that are often tenuously linked at best (school and college), which frequently hold different views of learning, different conceptions of authority and even different assumptions on what the educational enterprise is basically about. This may very well be not only the source of periodic anxieties but

may well undermine a student teacher's efforts to put together a coherent picture of his or her own identity as a teacher (Van Helden, 1985; Vonk, 1983). The 'theory/practice' rift in the experienced world of the student teacher is very often the natural outcome of a conflict of world views concerning the nature of the educational enterprise itself. To date educational research has failed to provide a coherent account of, and a compelling rationale for, what the educational enterprise is essentially about and what it is not about. Despite the progress of educational research on matters such as the effective aspects of teaching and the performative aspects of learning, there is as yet no universal standard among educators by which one might properly distinguish acts of teaching and learning which are genuinely educational from those which are not. While there are some general and well-intentioned beliefs about the 'aims' of teacher training, there is little agreement over the specifics of training. Presumably, if there was a core of theoretical and practical knowledge that was accepted by educationists as being central to and necessary for professional preparation, it would be included in all courses for intending teachers. Intending teachers must 'know' the subject they intend to teach; but besides this, it is difficult to identify on the basis of surveys what Student Teachers must know or how they ought to be prepared for the classroom. It is not sufficient to leave it to the students to establish the essential link between theory and practice: the staff themselves need to build them together 'into the tightest possible relationship' (UCET 1979).

Many students, when they become teachers, find that they change their minds as to the practical possibility of carrying out ideas that they had when they were students. Bartholomew (1976) maintains that 'when they do become teachers they adopt the widespread view of teachers on the inadequacy or irrelevance of teacher education'. He demonstrates that part of the way of understanding the theory and practice gap between the college and the school is through an understanding of the gap between theory and practice as it exists within the Higher Education Institution. His thesis is that liberal theory is transmitted through teaching and learning practices that are conservative.

2.2.2 The Tension between Higher Education Institutions and Schools

The tension between the training offered by the Higher Education Institution and school is resolved by students by using two levels of professional value, one for use in the Higher Education Institution and one for use in the classroom. Shipman (1967a) detected these two levels in the discrepancies between answers to questionnaires, interviews and group discussions. Students answered questionnaires as though they were extensions of professional theory examinations. In discussions and interviews the attitudes expressed were more in line with those found in schools. This use of impression management enabled them to insulate themselves from those influences that the Higher Education Institution was most concerned to transmit. There appeared to be a tendency for the influence of the Higher Education Institution staff to be in inverse proportion to the time that had elapsed since they left teaching. The consequences of this would be a transitory influence by the Higher Education Institution. Shipman's (1967a) results show that ex-students moved in their first half year of teaching away from the attitudes of the Higher Education Institution to those of the type of school in which they were teaching. This accounted for their great dissatisfaction with the course of the Higher Education Institution as a preparation for teaching. Like Williams (1963), Ogren (1953) and Thimme-Gowda (1948), Shipman (1967b) discovered that students rank academic work behind practical teaching and sometimes behind professional courses. Findings like these underlined the requirements by the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education in England for Teacher Educators to possess recent and relevant experience in schools and more recent moves towards more school-based training.

Hirst (1993) advances a new thesis about what is at the heart of education, which replaces his forms of knowledge thesis. In a recent interview (1994), he argues that:

> '...initiation into the fulfilling life cannot be achieved by amassing abstract, theoretical knowledge and then applying it; rather that the elements from which we must build our good lives are the social practices that we have developed in human society....They are not simple ways of thinking about the world, or forms of knowledge that then lead to action. Rather they are complex blends of acting, thinking and feeling; each is a mixture of skills, values and knowledge that has to be grasped as a whole.'
>
> (Hirst, 1994, p.8)

The field of teacher education helped him to develop this thesis:

> 'I became aware of this most strongly in the training of teachers. The only way to get students to perform professionally is to put them in a classroom with extremely able teachers and to get them going in the best practices we have developed in subject teaching, in organising schools and in planning the curriculum. Although we might look to the fundamental disciplines of philosophy, psychology and sociology to clarify some of the practical problems, we can never get the practical business of successful teaching worked out from these disciplines.'
>
> (Hirst, 1994, p.10)

Hirst goes on to put forward his views about the current debate on teacher education in England and Wales, school-based teacher training and the role of the university:

> 'Mastery of the best-developed practices of teaching lies at the heart of professional training; everything else must start there. Learning to teach can only be acquired on the job, alongside experienced professionals in the context of practice. This has to be done in particular classes, with particular children, and it is only the teachers of those classes and children who can sophisticate students into the appropriate practices.
>
> Now that's all right , so far as it goes. But really professional training demands much more than being initiated into a set of practices, even if those are generally regarded as the best available. A reflective element is also essential to adequate professional practice. Questions arise about the general principles and values of classroom practice, about practices other than those used in the school in which the student is training. The intelligent student is going to begin asking questions about what is going on in the classroom, the school, and education generally. So I see professional training as developing from immersion in existing practices - hopefully the best there are - through progressively sophisticated forms of reflection into the development of a relatively autonomous professional teacher who may then get into considerations of a fundamental kind.
>
> Of course one can only push so far at the initial stage. However, I think it would be disastrous if the training of teachers became static and related simply to the context in which the student is being trained. To help students to reflect analytically, and at progressively more sophisticated levels, must be a fundamental part of training. Even at the initial stage students need to probe the assumptions andvalues that lie behind the practical training. I don't think that teachers in classrooms, even the best, with all their responsibilities, can hope to engage to a high enough degree in detached reflection. It needs a standing back from the particularities of the classroom, and the proper place for it is the university, or institute of higher education, where you can have specialists in teaching methods and in the fundamental disciplines.

> So I don't myself think that, without thorough-going collaboration between the university and schools, we shall ever get a really satisfactory professional training. It cannot be a role that schools assume on their own; in all other complex professional fields, it is recognised that responsibility for training lies best with the university and so it should be with teaching. The task is to produce an institutional structure in which there is real collaboration between teachers, schools and the university.... I hope we can prevent what I would regard as the extreme nonsense of not only taking responsibility for the initial training of teachers out of university hands, but of even calling into question whether there should be a university input into training at all. That way would, I fear, lead us ultimately to professional disaster.'
>
> (Hirst, 1994, p.11)

Hirst's stance has considerable implications for the Maltese scene. There is no threat of taking away teacher education from the university. However, the divide between 'theory and practice', with theory being identified with their university training and practice with the schools has been especially accentuated for Maltese student teachers. The strained relationships between the Faculty and Department of Education have meant that no attempts have been made to link the two components of the course. Often the student teachers are constrained to have two different teaching approaches; one to fulfil the requirements of their training course and university tutors and the other to fit within the style favoured by the school.

2.2.3 The Maltese Experience

The B.Ed.(Hons) course run by the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta extends over four years. The aim of the course as identified in the Faculty Prospectus (1987, p.18) is to 'produce':

> 1) Professionally competent teachers, capable of deployment both at the primary and secondary levels of education;
>
> 2) Teachers who have the necessary expertise and frame of mind to understand, initiate and adapt to social change in Malta and overseas, particularly in the Mediterranean region.

The more specific course objectives as laid out by the prospectus (p.18) are that the undergraduates develop:

> 1) A professionally based knowledge in the theory and practice of education;
>
> 2) A commitment to the teaching profession and its important role in Malta's economic, social and cultural development;
>
> 3) An understanding of students, their abilities and potentialities and the social contexts within which they live and learn;
>
> 4) An ability to assist students to reach their full intellectual and social potential.

It is interesting to note that 'knowledge in the theory and practice of education' is listed as the first course objective. The question of how best to achieve this has always been an issue within the Faculty. However, the attempts to do this have been sporadic and patchy. From time to time there has been an insistence that Faculty lecturers need to descend from their ivory tower and to address more specifically the realities of the classroom. For some time 'micro-teaching' was seen to be the solution. In the first year of the course the students undertake a course called 'Introduction to School Experience' which requires them to visit a classroom for half a day once a week and to complete a task set to them beforehand. Then as a follow-up to this the students meet in groups with a university tutor to discuss their observation of the classroom situation. This leads them into their first formal teaching practice phase which takes place before Easter and lasts for five weeks. In each year of the course the students undergo a teaching practice phase of the same length. Each session is supervised and assessed by

a university tutor. There is no formal collaboration between the Faculty and the Department of Education. However, because of the high centralisation of the Maltese state schooling system, anybody who intends to collaborate with a state school needs to be vetted and cleared by the Directorate of Department of Education. In this climate it is not possible to have collaboration with schools which is not formally regulated. This notwithstanding the fact that the Faculty Prospectus (1987) recognises that the:

> 'systematic fusion of theory and practice will materialise through close co-operation between the university and the schools, with the two sectors operating as both research and field laboratories.' (p.20)

In effect these lofty ideals have not as yet been wholly realised for a number of reasons. Reference has already been made to the forced co-existence between the Faculty and the Department of Education (p.22). This has contributed to nipping in the bud attempts by individuals to strive for a better understanding and working relations between the two institutions. This issue will be discussed further in the section specifically concerned with teaching practice (p.42).

More recently, there have been attempts by some members of staff of the Faculty of Education to relate theory to practice through the content of the course and a re-structuring of the way that teaching practice is supervised. The first attempt has been a publication by members of the Faculty of Education of a reader entitled: *Themes in Education-A Maltese Reader* (Sultana [ed.], 1991) which accompanies the course: 'Situations and Themes in Education'. This reader attempts to replicate partially within the local situation a model of teacher education which has been implemented by the University of Cambridge Department of Education. The reader contains a selection of papers dealing with a number of educational issues. Most of the papers are grounded in Maltese data. The objective of the programme is to deal with issues arising from the classroom situation: Discipline, Assessment, etc. and to deal with these from the perspective of the foundation disciplines of Education, namely: Psychology, Philosophy and Sociology of Education. However, the starting point is always the classroom situation.

Another attempt to bridge theory and practice has been the recent endeavour to launch a mentoring scheme so that the supervision of Student Teachers on their Teaching Practice is conducted jointly by the university tutors and experienced teachers.

However, this scheme is still being launched on an experimental basis and on a limited scale, so it is too early to identify what its impact on teacher education will be.

2.3 Teaching Practice

The earliest record of student teaching as part of a college-based education in the UK dates from the fifteenth century (Morris, 1974). As Wade (1976, p.59) has pointed out, no other aspect 'is so traditionally accepted yet suffers so much from the lack of a theoretical basis with which to support future developments or indeed to justify present ones'. The assumption underlying much current practice is that teaching is best learned by observing practitioners, by serving an apprenticeship with a 'good' teacher. The student teacher 'is expected to acquire teaching expertise by watching someone else teach and attempting to go away and do likewise' (Stones, 1984, p.21). Such an approach implies an essentially passive role for the supervisor as someone who must not interfere 'with the guidance of the master and his apprentice' (Stones, 1984, p.21).

2.3.1 Teaching Practice in Malta

In Malta, the whole notion of the role of teaching practice within teacher education has been until recently looked upon very much as a period of total immersion in teaching, with the first Teaching Practice being very much viewed as a 'baptism of fire'. The student-worker scheme that was in operation at the University of Malta between 1979 and 1987 required that the student teachers were on Teaching Practice for five and a half months of the year. The rest of the time was spent on campus with one month of holidays. Some of the students were out on Teaching Practice from September to February, the rest from February to July. The classes that were taught by the student teacher did not have a regular teacher and they were the sole responsibility of the student teacher in question. No official support was provided by the school or the Department of Education. The role of the University tutor was very much that of an assessor. The notion of the old school inspector had been very much taken up by the university tutor, although most of them attempted to dispel this notion. However they

were often referred to as such by the school staff and the Student Teachers, if only to get the pupils to behave. There was much frustration on the part of the Student Teachers who felt that they belonged to neither their school nor to the university. For most of them Teaching Practice was a time of extreme stress.

When the student-worker scheme was dropped in 1987, the Faculty changed to a five-week Teaching Practice session, one in each year of the course. Although the class was 'taken over' from a regular teacher, the latter did not have any remit to provide any assistance to the intending teacher in any way. Often, depending on the exigencies of the school, the teacher whose class was being taught by the student-teacher, took over another class (whose teacher was absent) or became involved in organising extra-curricular activities at the school, sometimes even performing clerical duties in the head teacher's office. The Student Teachers are seen to be the sole responsibility of the university tutors, who are their assessors. Often a situation would arise where the advice proffered by the university tutor is in direct conflict to that offered by the school head teacher. This puts the student teacher in a very awkward position.

The Teaching Practice Session carries with it a number of grades that count towards the final degree classification of the B.Ed.(Hons). The university tutors are provided with a checklist of general skills and attitudes that they may decide to adopt or not. However they are expected to provide feedback by means of a follow-up report to the student teacher after each visit. Many of the university tutors also conduct Teaching Practice tutorials for students after school hours. In 1993, the Faculty made some tentative experiments with the establishment of a mentoring scheme that is currently being piloted in a number of schools. It is too early to predict what kind of impact such a scheme will have on teacher education in Malta, and whether it will lead to its wider implementation on a national basis. It seems that unless it receives the full support of the Department of Education and is not just seen as another 'fancy' initiative from the Faculty, such a scheme is bound to fail. There are mixed feelings about such a scheme within the Faculty itself as some think that such a strategy should have been adopted ages ago, whereas others think that teachers are ill-equipped to act as mentors. The schools have put forward mixed reactions, with some relishing the idea of playing a more important role in the education of intending teachers and others thinking that they already have enough on their hands without taking on board what in fact they see to be the responsibility of the university tutors.

2.4 Development and Transition from Training to Practice

The development and transition of prospective teachers from pre-service training through the initial years of teaching have received increasing attention in recent years. This increased attention is evident through the proliferation of teacher induction programmes, the renewed interest in the problems reported by beginning teachers, the development of theoretical views of teacher evolution from novice to effective professional educator, and through recent accreditation and certification standards extending the evaluation of teacher education programmes from initial pre-service training through the first few years of teaching.

Studies about the appraisal of the process and content of teacher training tend to focus upon institutional arrangements: allocation of resources, curriculum structures, relationships between different parts of courses, validation and so on, and these are 'evaluated' in terms of, for example, staff and student opinions and satisfactions. The quality and competence of future teachers will depend, if anything, upon the nature and content of their education and training within the institutions themselves.

Two examples of teacher training research on attitudes are the Sussex study reported by Lacey (1977) and the Bristol study of Taylor and Dale (1971). A major focus of the Sussex survey was attitude and attitude change. Student Teachers were monitored along a variety of attitude dimensions, (naturalism, tender-mindedness and attitude to teaching as a career) as they passed through the PGCE course and into the schools. Attitudes were also measured in the Bristol study, although here another source of data was questions about the students' level of satisfaction with various elements of their course, and their ratings of the usefulness of various parts of it for their teaching. Both of these kinds of approach are valuable, although incomplete and not without difficulties. The relevance of attitudes to behaviour or to teaching competence is problematic. Satisfaction and perceived relevance depend upon young teachers' introspections at a time when they may be under stress and difficulty.

2.5 The Changing Experience of the Student Teacher

One feature of Schon's (1971) analysis of change is the notion of dynamic conservatism, namely the tendency for individuals and organisations to resist change vigorously by developing structures or mechanisms that make change difficult. Schon's argument in 'Beyond the Stable State' is that, gradually, organisations need to become learning systems, and that the process is helped if change is not attempted in a large organisation by imposing it from the centre to the periphery. Rather, it is easier and produces less opposition if change is allowed to take place in the peripheral areas of an organisation and gradually communicates itself throughout the corporate body.

Zeichner (1980) analysed the role that the student teaching experience plays in the development of teachers and the relative contribution of various individual and institutional factors to the socialisation process. Lortie (1975) argues that the socialisation of teachers occurs largely through the internalisation of teaching models during the thousands of hours spent as pupils in close contact with teachers. In Lortie's view, it is the activation of this 'latent culture' with the onset of school experience that is the major influence in shaping students' conceptions of the teaching role and role performance. Cortis (1977) focuses attention on the fact that many teachers are formally trained only once. It is therefore essential that what they learn in that time is sufficiently relevant to provide them with a grounding ('survival kit') to cope in the schools for the first few months or years, until their experiences in the schools take over.

We generally know very little about the impact of teaching practice on the professional perspectives of Student Teachers. Most studies, by relying exclusively upon the pre- and post-administration of questionnaires and surveys for data and not upon observations of and discussions with students as the experience evolves, have failed to address many important questions related to the experience (see Zeichner, 1984).

Studies (e.g., Gibson, 1976; Haslam, 1971; Iannaccone, 1963; Popkewitz, 1979; and Tabachnick *et al.*, 1979-80) have provided fairly consistent data about the impact of student teaching on the teaching perspectives of Student Teachers. Generally, these studies indicate that student teaching contributes to the development of instrumental

perspectives, where what works in the short run to get the class through the required lesson in a quiet and orderly manner becomes the major criterion for evaluating a teaching activity.

The results of Tabachnick & Zeichner's (1984) study suggest several directions for future research on student teacher socialisation and for the conduct of teaching practice programmes. Their findings that Student Teachers for the most part were able to control the direction of their socialisation and develop more elaborated versions of the perspectives that were evident at the beginning of the semester are contrary to the conventional wisdom in the field and to the results of numerous studies indicating that Student Teachers' attitudes and perspectives are significantly altered during student teaching. Their findings support the position of Lortie (1975) and others who argue that teaching practice plays little part in altering the course set by anticipatory socialisation and challenge the findings of Hoy and Rees (1977) and others who contend that student teaching exerts a powerful and homogenising influence on relatively malleable Student Teachers. At the same time their findings challenge Lortie's (1975) position by supporting a view of student teacher socialisation as a more negotiated and interactive process where what students bring to the experience gives direction to, but does not totally determine the outcome of the socialisation process. Tabachnick & Zeichner underline the inappropriateness of viewing the student teacher experience as a unitary entity unrelated to specific programme content and to contextual factors existing in particular institutions. The present study examines the self-perceptions of preparation and competence of Maltese student and beginning teachers in the various competencies related to the specific programme content of the Maltese B.Ed.(Hons) degree course. The question of the impact of the teaching practice experience on the development of teachers should be recast in the future as one where attempts are made to link specific dimensions of programmes and contextual factors to socialisation outcomes.

2.6 Change in Attitudes and Concerns

Fuller (Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Brown, 1975) conceptualised the development of teachers as passing through phases of concerns about becoming a teacher and further

hypothesised that these phases of concerns (self, task, and impact) are sequential and cumulative. In early pre-service training the prospective teachers are characterised by a lack of concern about teaching, having little understanding of pupils, and by being concerned about their own survival as students. As the pre-service experiences unfold concerns about teaching emerge, but with an orientation toward self-survival; later concerns focus on the teaching task itself; and finally with teaching experience the mature teacher's focus of concern is upon his or her impact upon pupils and their growth.

In studies extending beyond the pre-service years, Adams (1982) reported a cross-sectional analysis of the concerns of Student Teachers and first, third, and fifth-year teachers, noting that self-survival-type concerns decreased with teaching experience, teaching task concerns increased with teaching experience, and impact upon student concerns, contrary to the Fuller model, were highest at all points of experience and did not change.

During pre-service training, research indicates that prospective teachers' attitudes tend to change from more formalised and rigid to more liberal and democratic perspectives in early training but with a return to the former less humanistic classroom management attitude during student teaching (Callahan, 1980; Jacobs, 1968; Lipka & Garlet, 1981) even though the prospective teachers' overall positiveness of attitude toward teaching and children may become even more positive (Paschal & Treloar, 1979; Sandgren & Schmidt, 1956).

A large number of studies have compared attitudes during training with attitudes which develop in the first year of teaching. These studies show an increase in 'radical', 'liberal' or 'progressive' attitudes by students during their course, attitudes which when they start teaching become more 'tough-minded' and 'conservative'. The research on attitudes shows the student moving from liberal to conservative attitudes as s/he moves from training to teaching. Morrison and MacIntyre (1967) 'explain' the increase in liberalism during training thus: 'The attitudes of individuals tend to change in the direction of those held by the majority in groups of which they are members, and also towards the attitudes held by groups to whose membership they aspire.'(p. 24) The decline in liberalism of attitudes is then explained in terms of impracticability of such attitudes in the actual teaching situation. Taylor (1969) explains that, 'Any gap between

what the college tutors seem to recommend and the teachers and the schools to value may produce a conflict in identification for the student. This is likely to be resolved in favour of the schools, which constitute a reference group of greater long-term import than the college, where the student spends only a limited period.' (p. 29)

The liberal view of the college is produced by comparing attitudes in the college with practices in the school. The relevance of what students learn from their practices and strategies as learners is minimal. We have nothing approaching adequate documentation of the 'effects' of teacher education. Such documentation has been limited almost entirely to the very narrow conceptualisation provided by attitude research.

In the study by Marso & Pigge (1989) three patterns of change in self-reported concerns were revealed through the pre-service and in-service years. These patterns may be characterised as low job specific concerns early in the pre-service years, an increase in job specific concerns as the prospective teachers anticipated instructional tasks in later training and actually experienced the complex tasks of instruction in full-time teaching, and decreases in self-type concerns with additional teaching experience. In reviewing the specific nature of concerns about teaching, the more experienced in-service teachers were found to be less concerned than pre-service teachers about maintaining class control and about the presence of a superior, but they were likely to be more concerned about feeling under pressure on the job and about having too many non-instructional duties. Differences in specific areas of concern, however, were as likely to be found within either the pre-service or in-service groups as they were likely to be found between these two groups.

Educators need to know more about the pre-service and in-service experiences that most influence the success of the transition of prospective teachers into full-time teaching, and in particular they need to know more about why the transition of prospective teachers into full-time teaching appears to be somewhat negative and perhaps even traumatic to the novice teacher. Weinstock and Peccolo (1970) suggest that teacher trainers need to provide different types of experiences for secondary and elementary prospective teachers. Evidence is accumulating which suggests that teacher training and the initial years of teaching have a predictable impact upon individuals.

2.7 The Structure and Process of Initial Teacher Education Study (SPITE)

Of particular relevance to the present research and concern with the link between preparation and competence is the SPITE project (The Structure and Process of Initial Teacher Education within Universities in England and Wales, which began in April 1979 and was funded by the Department of Education and Science{see Patrick *et al.*, 1982}). The main purpose of the research was to gather data on university departments of education with respect to the process of initial teacher education, and to attempt an understanding of the relationship between that training and the beginning of graduate teachers' careers.

The first aim was to conduct a large scale survey of all university departments of education, gathering information about their staff and students, their aims and practices. The second part of the project looked at the outcomes of the teacher training year for the Student Teachers in twenty nine university departments in England and Wales which offered an established PGCE by the Spring of 1979. The Student Teachers were followed through their training year and into their first jobs. Measures of attitude, satisfaction and role were incorporated into the study, but the main focus was on the activities and experiences of the Student Teachers during their training year and their first two years in school, and on the match between experiences on the courses, experiences in schools, and the availability of induction programmes. Data were gathered about the types of teaching preparation the Student Teachers received (method work, teaching practice, school visits, course content, etc.), and the kinds of pupils and teaching methods with which they came into contact. A similar procedure during the first two years of teaching provided information about the schools in which the students were teaching, the kinds of pupils they were expected to teach and the kinds of teaching they did.

One of the main aims of the study was to match input in the training year with subsequent output in employment, as well as getting the probationers' and, later, qualified teachers' own assessments of the relevance of their training to their employment. A particular focus of interest was the extent to which probationers introduced new techniques and ideas learned on their courses into schools, and the

relationship between the training process, classroom practice, and induction programmes.

2.7.1 Methodology of the SPITE Study

The Student-Teacher Enquiry

The main sample consisted of 5,000 Student Teachers commencing their postgraduate teacher training in 29 University Departments of Education. These Student Teachers completed an initial questionnaire which analysed both their academic and social backgrounds, their reasons for deciding to train as teachers, for selecting their particular PGCE courses, as well as their early attitudes and perceptions towards their postgraduate teacher training courses, teaching and future careers. The questionnaires were completed within the first three weeks of the Student Teachers starting the course, usually within the first week and often on their first day at registration.

This cohort of Student Teachers was asked to complete a second questionnaire towards the end of their postgraduate course. Thereafter, they were followed as probationary teachers in 1980/81 and as fully qualified teachers in 1981/82, during which time they received follow-up questionnaires.

The main sub-sample consisted of Student Teachers undertaking selected key subjects in seven rather different university departments of education. The chosen subjects were Physics, Mathematics, Biology, English, History and French. These Student Teachers completed a second questionnaire on selected aspects of their PGCE course work about six weeks from the beginning of term. This questionnaire included sections on their early reactions to their courses, their main method and other course work, the content, amount, type and evaluation of their course work and their current attitudes, problems, attendance, participation and commitment to teaching, as well as a scale which analysed their attitudes to the role of the teacher. These students also provided the researchers with their termly timetables so that some form of detailed analysis of course content, durations, and differences between institutions and subject boundaries could be performed.

The main sub-sample received a second questionnaire around April, 1980, and further questionnaires as probationary and qualified teachers in 1981 and 1982. The second sub-sample comprised a one in six selection by sex and subject of Student Teachers from the main sub-sample who completed the second questionnaire; as it was essential to include enthusiastic and interested Student Teachers, the selection process involved asking for willing volunteers. These Student Teachers were interviewed using a social anthropological approach and they kept course diaries.

The Staff Enquiry

The questionnaire for staff was structured into three parts: the first section dealt with academic, social and other background factors; the second section took a detailed look at the staff's involvement in and perceptions of the PGCE courses; while the third section analysed the tutors' part in the organising and teaching of main subject (method) work. The pilot study was conducted amongst selected staff, who went on to criticise the questionnaire for length, relevance, structure and content and was distributed to contact persons in the 29 University Departments of Education. The staff questionnaire was followed by a series of in-depth interviews with 15% of the staff, including heads of departments, senior staff who teach and administer the PGCE, main subject and professional subject tutors. Firstly a proportion of all staff who teach on the PGCE in each of the University Departments of Education was interviewed. Secondly an attempt was made to interview all those tutors whose students had been included in the student main sub-sample and second sub-sample. In this way the researchers could match the differences and similarities between the students' and their tutors' perceptions of PGCE work. This is an important point, as 'relevance' has often proved to be a contentious issue for both tutors and their student teachers alike. The interviews concentrated on the process of teacher education. In particular, they sought information regarding the organisation of lecture, seminar and method work; school practice; the balance of school visits to other work; the kinds of schools to which students were introduced, and the extent to which local teachers were used as teacher tutors or in other roles. Questions were asked of the tutors concerning the extent of their work within their university and department, the problems and pressures they perceived in their roles and the perceived status of the PGCE in their departments by comparison with other courses. In summary, information was elicited from the staff regarding their own

experience, training and academic backgrounds, their aims, attitudes and professional self-concepts.

This is the largest longitudinal study of student teachers to follow the subjects through their probationary year and into fully qualified teacher status. The sample is the largest of its kind that attempts to match the perceptions of both the student teachers and their teacher educators. The analysis used an 'across the board' approach rather than a concentration upon specialised aspects in a bid to match the whole training process to the teaching outcomes. The questionnaires sought both detailed and general information on many aspects of the then existing PGCE courses. Naturally it was not possible to achieve an equal spread across every area as some aspects were more sensitive or easy to investigate than others.

The staff enquiry meant that both teacher and taught can be combined to show two very different perspectives of the same problem: 'what', 'how' and 'why' something is taught, and 'what', 'how' and 'why' this something is received. Thus the researchers hoped to be in a position to explore whether the aims of the trainers matched the objectives of the trainees. As the student teachers progressed in terms of their experiences in the schools, the researchers hoped to show not only how relevant their PGCE courses were at the time of training, but subsequently also how related to their post-training teaching.

The results of the study indicated that there was a general awareness of the inadequacies of existing PGCE courses in the United Kingdom and of attempts to evaluate them. There is a lack of knowledge about the specifics and outcome of postgraduate teacher training. There is considerable variety between and within courses. The roles of the schools in training are differently perceived. The uniqueness of each course and institution is reinforced by the autonomy of the method tutor and by the methods of selecting the student teachers, which appeared to vary within the selection processes both in quantity and quality between the subject disciplines.

2.8 The New Teacher in School Studies

Two surveys by HM Inspectors in England and Wales were conducted in 1981 and 1987 and reported in 1982 and 1988 respectively. These surveys set out to establish how newly trained teachers (probationers) in England and Wales fare in their first year of teaching. They aimed to assess how well these probationers are equipped for the work they are assigned in their first posts, and to judge the extent to which schools make the best use of the skills, knowledge and training that they bring to their first posts. They also attempted to identify the extent to which support is provided where it is needed and the circumstances of training and school environment which contribute to the new teachers' satisfaction with their jobs and to the quality of work in their classrooms.

The population from which the sample of teachers visited was drawn included all those who started teaching in September 1986 and who had acquired qualified teacher status through the BEd, PGCE or other graduate routes, and certificated teachers, provided they were new entrants to the profession. The size and nature of the sample visited by HM Inspectors for the 1987 survey were broadly similar to those of 1981. In all, 297 new teachers were visited, including 120 primary and middle, and 177 secondary teachers. In the questionnaires they completed before being visited by the HM Inspectors, probationers recorded their overall assessment of their training, gave their views on the balance of their training course and indicated how well prepared they felt they were, as a result of their training, for different aspects of their job. In the case of the more recent survey, the new teachers were visited by HM Inspectors over a period of about five weeks in the Spring term of 1987, with individual HM Inspectors making up to six visits. Following their observation of lessons, the Inspectors discussed both the training and lessons with probationers and assessed the extent to which the new teachers displayed competence in their skills which they might have been expected to acquire through training.

Two-thirds of the 297 new teachers studied were well or reasonably well satisfied with their training and over half considered that appropriate emphasis had been given to the appropriate components of their course. However, substantial proportions felt that the more practical aspects of the course had received too little attention. A third of the

primary teachers whose courses had included both professional training and academic subject study thought that academic studies had been over-emphasised. Large proportions of the new teachers surveyed emerged from training feeling less than adequately prepared for important areas such as teaching the less able and children with special educational needs, and administrative and pastoral duties. A substantial number of new teachers felt that discipline and control had not been adequately dealt with on their courses. Primary teachers felt less than adequately prepared for classroom management, the teaching of reading, teaching the more able and using audio-visual equipment.

The overall judgement of the Inspectors was that, taking into account the quality of the teaching and the response of the pupils, nearly four lessons out of ten were good or excellent, three-quarters were at least satisfactory, but a quarter were unsatisfactory. They found that schools had high expectations of the professional skills, academic knowledge and personal qualities of new teachers, but the expectations of many were excessive and some expected probationers to function immediately as fully fledged practitioners.

2.9 The First Years of Teaching

Vonk and Schras (1987), who conducted a follow-up study of the professional development of a group of primary and secondary North American teachers during their second to fifth year of service, consider that teachers' professional development (the period from beginner to full professional) takes an average of about seven years. The practice experienced and the behaviour developed during these seven years are considered to be of major influence on beginning teachers' professional behaviour during the rest of their career. Much has been written about the first year of teaching (Veenman, 1984). However, what happens after the first year of teaching is mostly investigated only in a career-wide perspective (Coates & Thoresen, 1976), and not directed at a teacher's development during the first few years of service.

Beginning teachers undergo a rapid and discontinuous transition from the role of student to teacher (Emmer, 1986). Wiseman & Start (1965), Gibson (1976) and

Nemser (1983) describe the abrupt induction phase as the 'reality shock'. This term indicates 'the collapse of the missionary ideals formed during teacher training by the harsh and rude reality of everyday classroom life'. Ryan (1979) offered a variety of reasons for reality shock. Beginning teachers might be undertrained and although they do have general training, they are not trained for specific jobs in specific schools. Muller-Fohrbodt *et al.* (in Veenman, 1984, p.147) teased out two types of causes for the reality shock: personal and structural causes. Personal causes are related to making a wrong choice of teaching as a profession, and to inappropriate attitudes and unsuitable personality characteristics. Structural causes include inadequate professional training and a problematic school situation. Woods (1981) regarded the 'transition shock' of First Year Teachers as the 'rite of passage experience' or 'baptism of fire in the classroom'.

Lortie (1975) acknowledges that new teachers must perform the same job as experienced teachers. In most cases this they have to do with little support. This is especially the case for Maltese beginning teachers in Malta as no official arrangements whatsoever are made for the beginning teacher to receive support from any source. Lacey (1977) agrees that there is a major discontinuity between training and the experience of the beginning teacher. Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) note that the teacher socialisation literature frequently portrays the beginning teacher as shaped by experienced teachers and by setting characteristics, with university training seen as a weak agent.

2.10 Changes in Beginning Teachers in their First Year of Teaching

Chan (1993) put forward a four-phase model for the changes that beginning teachers go through in their first year of teaching. The four phases of Chan's model are the following:

1) The end of the pre-service teacher education course

The student-teachers are assumed to be equipped to take up their teaching posts as they have now undergone their teacher education course and have had limited exposure to real classroom situations on their Teaching Practice.

2) The Familiarisation Phase: the first few months

The beginning teachers who have now engaged in regular teaching are faced with shock at the reality of the classroom situation. They start to have doubts about their competence in teaching as they are struggling to survive. There is a general decline in their perception of teaching competence.

3) The Adjustment Phase: between two or three months to mid-year

As they become more familiar with the working environment of the classroom the focus moves gradually away from non-teaching to teaching tasks. Some beginning teachers gradually begin to regain their confidence and recover from the 'reality shock'. There is now less concern with class control and discipline and more concern with improved classroom management skills and teaching strategies. Some others may be stuck in the phase of 'reality shock'. Others still may move further downward into a state of shock, with an even lower general level of Perceived Competence, possibly leading to early burnout.

4) The Stabilisation Phase: the latter half of the first year

Beginning teachers of average ability come to focus more on their teaching and go on to accumulate successful experiences (cf. the 'Mastery Stage' of Ryan, 1986). Those of them who are satisfied with their teaching after increased success, may become complacent about their teaching performance and a 'plateau' period is reached and extended till the end of their career. (cf. the 'Pragmatic' or 'Paradigmatic' Strategy of Woods, 1981). Woods put forward the view that beginning teachers may use either the 'Pragmatic' or 'Paradigmatic' strategy in coping with the teaching situation in their first year of teaching. The pragmatists combine partial redefinition with situational adjustment and the 'privatisation' of educational problems. They are survivors who will go on to flourish within the system. The paradigmatists, in their pursuit of the real sense of teaching, become engaged in open conflict with the school authorities. Those others who still at this stage have not recovered from shock would go on to lose confidence in teaching as a profession.

2.11 Changes over the Years

Adams (1982) reported a cross-sectional analysis of the concerns of Student Teachers and first, third, and fifth-year teachers. He noted that the beginning teachers' concerns about their own survival decreased with teaching experience, teaching task concerns increased with teaching experience, and concerns with their impact upon student learning was highest at all points of experience and did not change. Two longitudinal studies using qualitative procedures (interviews and observations) reported the presence

of intense self-type concerns in the initial year of teaching but an alleviation of these types of concerns by the third and fourth years of teaching (Gehrke & Yamamoto, 1978; McArthur, 1980). Villeme and Hall (1980) found that prospective teachers' attitudes toward teaching and children vary by gender and anticipated teaching grade level. Female teachers and primary teachers in their first years of teaching seem to be better placed at retaining their liberal attitudes when compared to their male and secondary colleagues. In a study extending beyond the pre-service and initial teaching years Paschal and Treloar (1979) reported that by the third year of teaching the teachers' more humanistic and liberal orientation toward class management that had been developed during teacher training had returned essentially to the same authoritarian orientation identified at the outset of teacher training. These studies suggest that concerns and attitudes toward teaching can change in a predictable way through pre-service training and into the initial years of employment as a teacher.

Marso & Pigge (1989) identified three patterns of change in concerns. These patterns were low teaching concerns early in the pre-service years as they were more concerned with their own survival, an increase in job specific concerns as the prospective teachers anticipated instructional tasks in later training and experienced the complex tasks of instruction in full-time teaching, and decreases in self-type concerns with additional teaching experience. The More Experienced Teachers were found to be less concerned than pre-service teachers about maintaining class control and about the presence of a superior. They were more likely to be concerned about feeling under pressure on the job and about having too many non-academic duties. Differences in specific areas of concern, however, were as likely to be found within either the pre-service or in-service groups as they were likely to be found between these two groups. Secondary teachers were found to be less concerned than primary teachers about the presence of a superior, being evaluated, meeting student needs and lack of sufficient instructional materials. However they were more likely to be concerned about the teaching setting being too routine and too inflexible. Primary school teachers' concerns were more similar to the concerns of the special education and specialised area teachers than they were to those of the secondary teachers.

2.12 The Curve of Disenchantment

The beginning teacher profile has been labelled the 'Curve of Disenchantment' (Ligana, 1970). This pattern of attitude change demonstrates a sharp negative drop about halfway through the first year of teaching, followed by an upswing and stabilisation period later in the year. However, the general attitude was still less positive than that exhibited during training. Zeichner and Tabachnick (1984) suggest that some attitudes may be resistant to change and that there may be individual differences associated with various patterns of change. Whilst conducting a long term study of a group of beginning teachers, Vonk (1982, 1983) established that all of them had crossed the threshold of the profession at the end of their first year of teaching as they had now grown into their professional role. There was a clear change at the end of the second year and/or the beginning of their third year of teaching. They reported becoming increasingly detached from school affairs and to having established classroom routines. Vonk discovered that this pattern of development, which mainly took place during the second year and the beginning of the third year of service, did not change very much during the fourth and fifth years of service. There seemed to be a period of consolidation after the third year. After their first year of service the beginning teachers studied by Vonk had tried to cope by adopting routines for the preparation of lessons, classroom management, control of student achievement, etc. They had built up a considerable independence and freedom of action. During their four years of service the teachers had become more distanced in their relations to their students and less involved with them. They had developed a more professional attitude towards their students. Nearly all of them tended to adapt to the existing learning materials, textbooks, etc.

Given the difficulty of the critical transition period of beginning teaching, one that is usually accompanied by minimal support (Lortie, 1975; Johnston and Ryan, 1983) it is quite conceivable that graduates' perceptions of the adequacy of their preparation are likewise mediated by extent and type of teaching experience (Hummel and Strom, 1986). For example, Gaede (1978) reported that first-year teachers often discover that they were not as well prepared as they thought, when they encounter unanticipated gaps in their professional competencies.

2.13 Continuity between Student Teaching and Beginning Teaching

Despite the existence of much empirical evidence on the vulnerability of first-year teachers to the press of institutional forces, studies also exist which demonstrate a resilience and firmness of beginning teachers despite pressures to change (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985). It has been shown that beginning teachers feel that they possess less knowledge about teaching at the end than at the beginning of the first year, e.g. Gaede (1978). Although there is much empirical research that supports the view that attitudes evidenced at the end of student teaching are abandoned by the end of the first year, there is also research that demonstrates a great deal of stability between student teaching and the end of the first year. Many, like Bartholomew (1976), Giroux (1980), Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981, 1985) have challenged the commonly accepted view that the socialising impact of the university is liberalising and that the socialising impact of the workplace is conservative in relation to the university's influence. Empirical studies such as those by Power (1981) and Petty and Hogben (1980) in Australia and by Mardle and Walker (1980) in England support this reluctance to accept the view of the 'progressive-traditional' shift in teaching perspectives during the first year and demonstrate that certain attitudes of beginning teachers appear to be resistant to changes. Power (1981) concludes that:

> The present evidence calls into question the pessimistic statements about reality shock for beginning teachers. If the conditions described by Dreeben (1970)...existed in this study and had the impact they suggested, it is difficult to believe that the influence would not be reflected in teachers' perceptions of themselves in the teaching role, in their evaluation of teaching as an occupational activity or in their vocational interests and aspirations, even at the group level. No such evidence appeared in the present data. It can be speculated that teacher training has a greater impact on the professional socialisation of teachers than has been realised.

Petty and Hogben (1980), Mardle and Walker (1980), and Goodlad (1990) also call into question the notion of reality shock, but see anticipatory socialisation as the most significant influence on teacher development:

> Indeed pre-service experience may be more profoundly influential than either the efficacy of training or the colleague control of later years. Teachers do not become resocialised during their course of training nor in the reality of the classroom, since in essence this is a reality that they never actually left.
>
> (Mardle and Walker, 1980, pp. 99, 103)

In both groups of studies, those that demonstrate changes and those which do not, some teachers experienced significant shifts in attitudes while others did not. Furthermore, among those who changed, the changes were often in different directions. The conclusions of all these researchers regarding continuity or discontinuity between student teaching and the end of the first year have been based in each instance on central tendencies of the groups of teachers studied, particularly shifts in mean scores on attitude measures. Power (1981) concludes that the evidence shows the transition from student teacher to beginning teacher to be characterised by remarkable stability:

> It can be seen that as a group, the sample revealed no significant change in perception of self in the teaching role. At the same time, while there is group stability, there is considerable systematic individual change. There was little or no change for the majority of subjects, but there were some subjects whose scores changed moderately or substantially in one or the other direction. (p.25)

2.14 Problems of Beginning and Experienced Teachers

2.14.1 Problems of First Year Teachers

Ryan (1979) speculated that beginning teachers encounter problems in their first year of teaching as they are undertrained for the demands of their job. Beginning teachers receive general training and are not trained for specific jobs in specific schools. Most teachers are isolated from their colleagues as in most schools there is one teacher per classroom. The cellular organisation of schools (Lortie, 1975) constrains the amount and type of interchange of experience and advice.

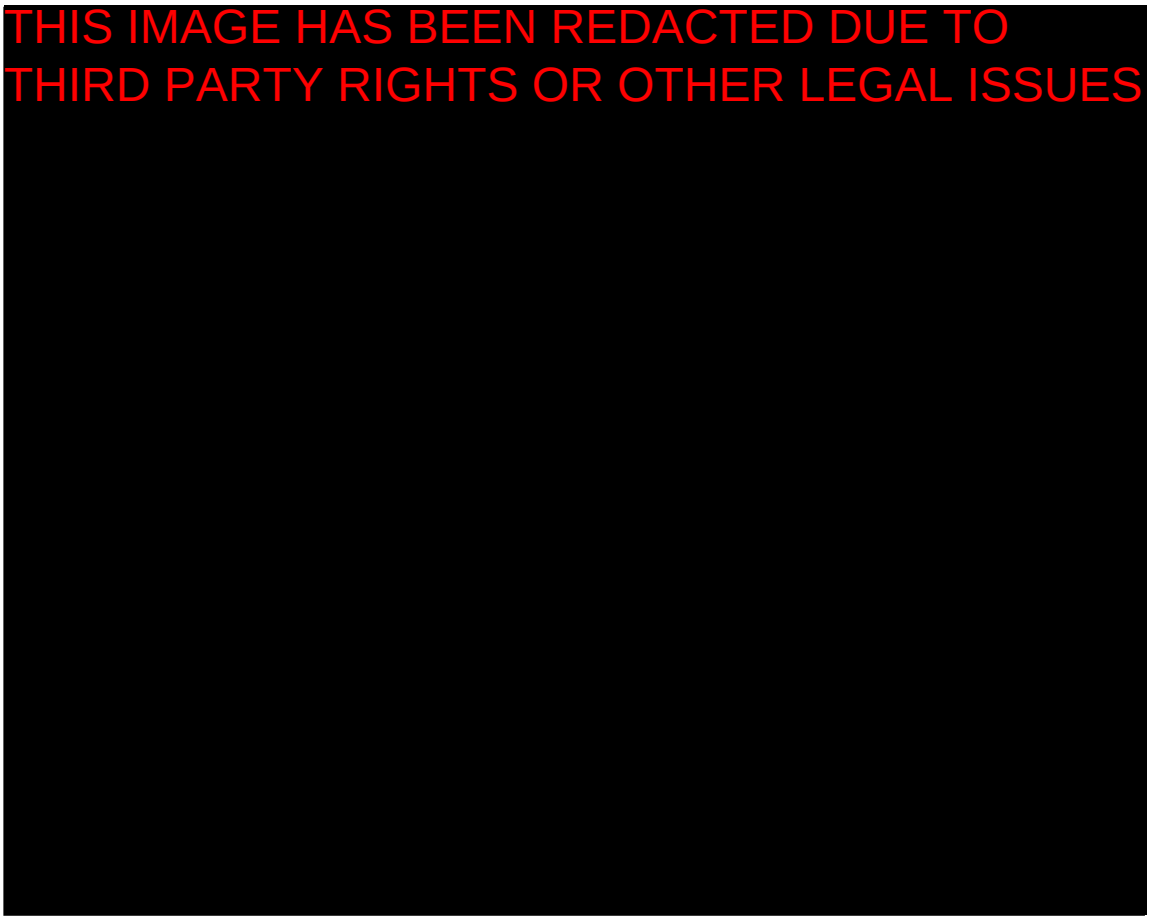
Knowledge of the most frequent problems of beginning teachers may provide important information for the improvement and redesigning of pre-service and in-service programmes and for improved supervision and induction practices. In the United Kingdom, several studies on problems of beginning teachers have been conducted (Bradley and Eggleston, 1978; Clark and Nisbet, 1963; Cornwell *et al.*, 1965; Cortis

and Dean, 1969-70; Hanson and Herrington, 1976; Taylor and Dale, 1971). Veenman (1984) identified 86 empirical studies on the problems of beginning teachers from all over the world. A problem was defined as a difficulty that beginning teachers encounter in the performance of their task and which hinders the achievement of intended objectives. Beginning teachers were defined as teachers who had not yet completed three years of teaching after qualifying as teachers.

Classroom discipline is the most seriously perceived problem area of beginning teachers. There is, however, some ambiguity about this concept as what is called discipline by one teacher may be called disorder by another teacher. The second highest ranked problem in the view of beginning teachers is *Motivation of pupils.* Beginning teachers often think that pupils are highly motivated. This misunderstanding can in part be attributed to the training institutions. Teacher Educators tend to describe pupils as they would like them to be rather than as they are. Teacher preparation tends to deal with what ought to be going on in schools rather than what is actually happening (Veenman, 1990). This tension between what should be and what is has to be solved by beginning teachers. Most of them are forced to rethink their expectations about pupils and schools.

Table 2.1 provides a list of the 24 most frequently cited problems of beginning teachers. In addition to the problems listed in Table 2.1, a number of other problems were reported frequently in the sampled studies (Veenman, 1990). These included: doubts and worries about own competence, inexperience with audio-visual aids, relationships with pupils, relationships with the school community, insufficient preparation for the job of teaching. Another difficulty encountered by many beginning teachers is that teaching is a physically exhausting job. In Veenman's (1990) research 90 per cent of the beginning teachers felt exhausted. Ryan (1980, p.7) offers a suggestion as to why new teachers suffer from exhaustion of this magnitude. They are not prepared for the physical and mental demands of teaching, for the strain of being in command and for being responsible for so many people for so long each day. A side-effect of the physical strain was that their personal relationships suffered and they experienced feelings of failure, insecurity and depression. Teacher training cannot fully prepare students for the exhaustion of the first weeks of teaching. (Veenman, 1990).

Table 2.1 List of the 24 Most Frequently Cited Problems of Beginning Teachers



(from Veenman, 1984)

2.14.2 Problems of Experienced Teachers

Even experienced teachers have difficulties with several of the identified problem areas. In several studies from different countries (Veenman, 1984) experienced teachers report the following problems: too large classes, lack of interest from parents, discipline problems, extra-school obligations, inadequate teaching materials, overloaded teaching task, too many administrative duties and motivating pupils. This illustrates that not only beginning teachers experience problems and that these problems are not linked solely with the entrance into the profession. Veenman (1990) believes that these problems are not insoluble and that it is still necessary to take formal steps to induct new members into the teaching profession. New teachers experience difficulties and they need help in their first years of teaching.

Despite the problems they encounter the beginning teachers are not necessarily discontented or dissatisfied with their jobs. In several studies from different countries about 80 per cent or more of beginning teachers are satisfied with their jobs (HMI, 1982, 1988; Veenman, 1990). Factors that influence the job satisfaction of beginning teachers include: relief at finding a job at all, the support received from the head and members of staff, the availability of advice from school, and the quality of relationships with head and colleagues. There was also an association between the First Year Teachers' satisfaction and both the schools' judgement of their effectiveness and HMI's assessment of their mastery of teaching skills. The better prepared teacher was the happier teacher. Beginning teachers were most satisfied when the school provided conditions that encouraged their full professional development.

Many factors determine the success of beginning teachers. These include the quality of initial training, the appropriateness of their appointment, the nature of the tasks the school has allocated them and the conditions under which they are carrying out these tasks, and the level and quality of support they are receiving from school and their Local Education Authority. Of great importance too are the personal qualities that the new teachers bring to their job (HMI, 1982, 1988). Taking into consideration all these factors, HMI rated over half of all newly trained teachers as well or very well equipped for their task and over three-quarters as adequately equipped or better. A good initial training and sympathetic and sound support from school or Local Education Authority

are significant elements to the effectiveness of teachers (Veenman, 1990). When reviewing the HMI (1982) study 'The New Teacher in School', McNamara (1986) questioned the validity of the conclusions arrived at by the HMI inspectors. The emphasis laid upon 'personal qualities' stems from their own inferences rather than being grounded in the responses of the head teachers, who were asked to rate the competencies of the beginning teachers.

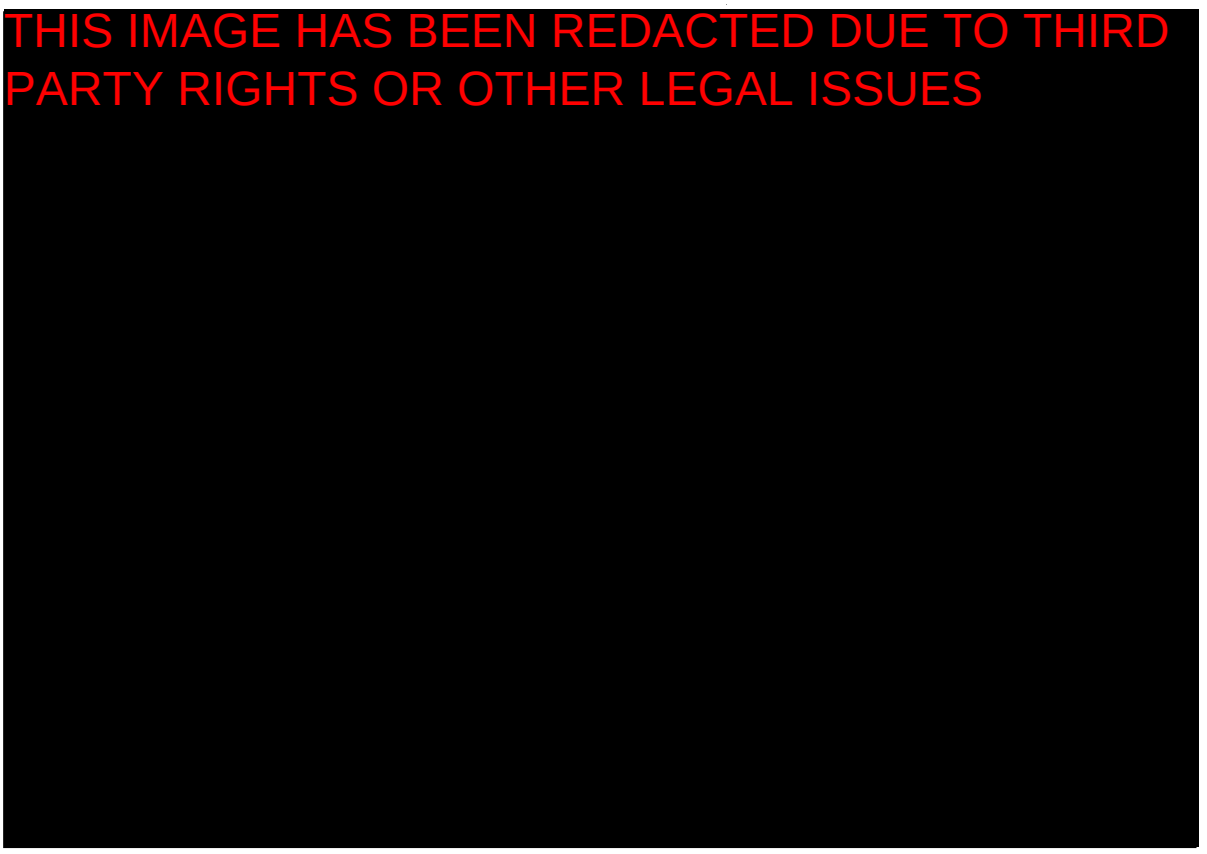
2.14.3 Problems of Maltese Student and Beginning Teachers

As part of the research study reported later (see Chapter 4), three cohorts: Maltese student teachers, first year teachers and teachers with two to four years of teaching experience were asked about the problems they encountered. Table 2.2 presents these findings:

The most frequent major problems encountered by the Student Teachers on their final Teaching Practice were *inadequate textbooks* and *audio-visual resources.* The First Year Teachers had most difficulty (even to a more considerable extent than the Student Teachers) with these same two items. A substantial number of First Year Teachers experienced problems too with a lack of clear direction from the administrative staff of the school. Again the majority of the More Experienced Teachers, with two to four years of teaching experience, experienced problems with *inadequate textbooks* and *audio-visual resources.*

It is evident from the above findings that in contrast to the international findings, Maltese beginning teachers are much more concerned with the lack of facilities available in state schools, in terms of textbooks and audio-visual resources than they are with class control and discipline.

Table 2.2 Problems Encountered by Student and Beginning Maltese Teachers*



*Actual question presented in Appendix II, p. 267.

2.15 Developmental and Socialisation Frameworks for the Study of Beginning Teachers

Veenman (1984) categorised recent research on teacher development into three main groupings: Developmental Stages of Concerns, the Cognitive Developmental Framework and the Teacher Socialisation framework. Research studies on teachers' concerns over time within a conceptual framework of phases of change (e.g. Adams & Martray, 1981) fall under the category of Developmental Stages of Concerns. The second category stems from theories and concepts of cognitive development that consider that the development of beginning teachers results from changes in their cognitive structures (e.g. Sprinthall & Thies-Sprinthall, 1983). Studies concerned with the changes of beginning teachers in their social contexts (e.g. Tabachnick *et al.*, 1983) are categorised within the Teacher Socialisation Framework.

Vonk (1984) put forward the following framework for research about teachers' professional development: the personal development approach, which lays emphasis on the process of individual growth of beginning teachers (Glassberg, 1979), the teacher personalisation approach, which lays emphasis on the process of acquiring expertise by beginning teachers (Brophy, 1979) and the teacher socialisation approach that lays emphasis on the beginning teachers' adaptation to the norms, values and rules of the professional environment (Lacey, 1977; Gehrke & Yamamoto, 1978). As with Veenman's classification personalisation developments are differentiated from socialisation. However, Vonk's teacher socialisation approach is further sub-divided into two categories. Firstly, there is the research within the normative socialisation paradigm which focuses on the influences of environmental agents on beginning teachers (Lacey, 1977; Ryan, 1986). Secondly, there is the research within the interactive socialisation paradigm which sees the socialisation process as a mutual interaction between the beginning teachers and their professional environment (Vonk, 1983; Vonk & Schras, 1987).

Within the Developmental Stages Framework, Fuller (1969) described beginning teachers as passing through three distinct phases: the first phase is that of 'survival concerns', when the beginning teacher first encounters real classroom situations; the second phase that of 'teaching situation concerns' as the beginning teacher becomes

more confident with his or her control of the pupils, and the third phase that of 'concerns about the pupils' needs, feelings and their individuality'. Ryan (1986) in turn suggested four stages of beginning teachers' professional development: the 'fantasy' stage, the 'survival' stage, the 'mastery' stage and the 'impact' stage. The studies of both Fuller (1969) and Ryan (1986) are based on stage models that assume a general hierarchical and invariant sequence of changes in the cognitive structures of the beginning teachers and a progression from lower to higher competence.

Lacey (1977) offered a tripartite schema for analysing the processes of adaptation involved in becoming a teacher. Firstly, there is the 'Internalised Adjustment' period in which the individual complies with constraints and believes that constraints of the situation are for the best. Secondly, there is the 'Strategic Compliance' period in which the individual still complies with the definition of the situation of authority figures, but retains private reservations about them. Thirdly, there is the 'Strategic Redefinition' period during which the individual tries to exert influence on those in power in order to bring about situational changes. Vonk (1983) put forward two periods of role socialisation that beginning teachers go through by the end of the first year: the threshold period in the first five to six months during which they have to face the reality of the 'shock' experience when facing the class and the school situations; and the period of 'growing up' throughout the rest of the year when they may start to experiment with personalised ways of dealing with colleagues, educational administrators and pupils.

Jordell's (1987) four-level model depicts structural and personal influences in the socialisation of beginning teachers. The personal level represents factors of the teachers' own experiences and the influence of their own prior experiences in learning before teaching. The classroom level represents the interactive influences of the teacher and the pupils. The institutional level represents the impact of the curriculum and the administrative and judicial apparatus. The societal level, which is the highest, represents the impact of economic, social and political structures which influence teacher socialisation.

Nias (1989), too, focuses on the socialisation aspect of teacher development. She emphasises the individuality of teachers but points also to emerging patterns, like the teachers' shared views of themselves, in terms of motivation, values and ideals. Some

of the teachers interviewed by Nias are in their first year of teaching. In order to become socialised new teachers must either accept these characteristics or appear to be doing so. Probationers felt that they needed to become competent as quickly as possible. They looked to head teachers and colleagues as role models. They were very selective in the assistance that they accepted and tended to reject views that did not fit in with their own beliefs. Bullough *et al.* (1991) in their study of the role played by newly qualified teachers in the USA in their own socialisation, present the socialisation process of six such teachers through case studies. They point out that the successful negotiation of the first year of teaching is dependent upon the personality of the new teacher and colleagues, the school and the community at large. All of these factors interact with each other. Bullough *et al.* conclude that beginning teachers need to have a reduced teaching load, in order to allow them more time for learning to teach. They make a strong case for mentors for beginning teachers and a higher degree of involvement in the school decision - making process on the part of these new teachers as part of their own socialisation process. Participation in this decision-making process is deemed to be essential in providing the new teachers with insights into how their school works and to signal to them that their views are valued.

It is recognised that there are multiple causes of positive and negative attitudes toward preparation programmes. The present study focuses on the possible effects of early experience on self-ratings of teacher preparation and teaching competence. Perceptions about preparation for teaching and competence in teaching of final year Student Teachers, First Year Teachers and More Experienced Teachers are compared. The effectiveness of university-based teacher-education programmes has been a major concern of much of the literature on teacher education (e.g. Newton & Brathwaite, 1987). Gargiulo and Pigge (1982), commenting on ten years of research across various programmes, note that the literature is 'replete with criticisms of the apparent lack of effectiveness of teacher education institutions.' Their own study found university training to be more effective in the theoretical areas than in the practical ones. A possible reason for such dissonance advanced by the study was a tendency for some skills to be perceived as being developed more through work experience than through university training. The study reported in the following chapters attempts to portray the effects of increased teaching experience on perceptions of preparation and ability in a number of competencies which are observable in the classroom situation. A follow-up

classroom study attempts to link perceptions of competence with differential classroom behaviour.

PART II PREPARATION AND COMPETENCE

CHAPTER THREE

PERCEIVED PREPARATION AND COMPETENCE

3.1 Introduction

A teacher's judgement of her or his ability to accomplish a certain level of teaching competence is one cognitive factor in a reciprocal deterministic model of behavioural functioning as described in social psychology. Beginning teachers' feelings of preparedness and competence may influence their ability to perform teaching tasks. From a reciprocal deterministic perspective, if student and beginning teachers see their training course as likely to enhance performance, they may teach more confidently, secure pupil receptiveness, and further augment their confidence (Housego, 1990a & 1990b). To believe that one is well prepared to teach may be as important an antecedent of successful teaching as any acquired credential. This study examines the self-estimates of preparedness and competence to teach from the premise of Bandura's (1986) well-developed efficacy theory as applied by Ashton and Webb (1986) to teaching. It links self-estimates of preparedness and competence in teaching with the concept of personal teaching efficacy. This research investigates perceptions of preparedness to perform and competence in teaching behaviours but does not measure these behaviours directly, except through their link with attributes of effective teachers for a sub-sample of the beginning teachers.

3.2 Teachers' Motivation and the Notion of Self-Efficacy

In their evaluation of a reading programme used in Los Angeles schools, Armor *et al.* (1976), in one of two studies on efficacy by the Rand Corporation, reported that teachers' sense of efficacy was 'strongly and significantly related to increases in reading [achievement]' (p. 24). In the other Rand study, an evaluation of teachers' uses of innovations, Berman *et al.* (1977) found a 'strong positive relationship' between teachers' sense of efficacy and all the evaluation's dependent variables - the percentage of project goals achieved, the extent of teacher change, improved student performance, and teachers' maintenance of the innovations (p.137). The researchers concluded that 'teachers' attitudes about their own professional competence, in short, appear to have major effects on what happens to projects and how effective they are' (p.137). A sense of efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs regarding the ability of pupils to learn in school and the teacher's confidence that he or she can teach such pupils effectively. In the past, research efforts to correlate specific teacher attitudes with pupil achievement have been discouraging (Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Getzels & Jackson, 1963). Thus the two Rand Corporation evaluation studies were a breakthrough because they suggest that teachers' sense of efficacy is a component of teacher motivation associated with pupil achievement. The decline in teacher motivation in Malta (e.g. Darmanin, 1990) signals an urgent need to increase our understanding of teacher motivation in general and most specifically the impact of teacher motivation on student achievement.

Self-efficacy is a central motivational concept in current psychological theory. Ashton and Webb (1986, p. 155) consider it to have the potential to link ideas on intrinsic motivation, notions of personal causation, attribution theory, and expectancy theory in a comprehensive motivational theory. All these, like self-efficacy, highlight the importance of the individual's personal control or power to shape events. Deci (1975) found that intrinsic motivation is reduced when one is driven by external events and denied choices. DeCharms (1976) showed that the root of motivation is personal causation - originating action and producing change in the environment. Weiner (1979), in attribution theory, argues that motivation increases when subjects attribute their success to ability and effort, and decreases when they attribute failure to lack of ability. Ability and effort are within oneself and, in the case of effort, more controllable

than such external factors as luck or task difficulty. Dusek *et al.* 's (1985) expectancy theory defined the reciprocal relationship between teacher expectations of pupil success and pupil effort and subsequent achievement. They claim that each factor enhances or augments the other. The teacher, in expecting pupil success, and possibly in being more prepared to ensure it, is more likely to secure it. The pupil, in succeeding, contributes to the teacher's sense of efficacy, of being able to control pupil learning - all of which illustrates reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1978). Social learning theory provides a reciprocal deterministic explanation of events in which each of three components, behaviour, internal personal factors, and environmental conditions plays a role in determining each of the others. Behaviour is jointly determined by one's personal characteristics and one's environment One's personal characteristics are shaped in relation to one's behaviour patterns and environmental conditions, and, in turn, environmental conditions are modified by both one's behaviour and one's personal dispositions.

Housego (1990a) contends that a reciprocal deterministic framework allows us to reflect on the complex relationships among teaching behaviours, a teacher's personal dispositions, of which feeling prepared and competent would be two factors, and the educational environment in which the teacher works. Housego (1990b) perceives one's feelings of preparedness as being part of perceived self efficacy, which Bandura (1986, p. 391) defines as 'a judgement of one's capacity to accomplish a certain level of performance'. Efficacy expectations are one part of Bandura's two-component efficacy model. The other model is outcomes expectations. Through outcomes expectations (Bandura, 1977, p.193), one understands that a particular course of action will produce certain outcomes, whether or not one can perform the necessary activities oneself (efficacy expectations). Bandura (1986) observes that 'individuals can believe that a particular course of action will produce certain outcomes, but they do not act on that outcome belief because they question whether they can actually execute the necessary activities' (p.392). They may question their preparedness to carry out these activities.

Ashton and Webb (1986, p.4) apply Bandura's theory to teaching, explaining outcomes expectations as teaching efficacy, that is, 'teachers' expectations that teaching can influence student learning.' Efficacy expectations are labelled personal teaching efficacy or 'an individual's assessment of their own teaching competence.' Housego

(1990b) suggests that estimates of preparedness to teach are 'self-assessments of teaching competence'. Ashton & Webb (1986, p. vii) consider the contexts of teacher education programmes and beginning teacher socialisation practices to be particularly relevant for the enhancement of teachers' sense of efficacy. Ashton and Webb found that teachers with higher self-efficacy were more likely to have a positive classroom environment. High teacher efficacy was positively associated with teachers' use of praise, individual attention to students, less use of criticism, frequent checking on students' progress in learning, and high student achievement on mathematics and language tests.

3.3 Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

The construct of teachers' sense of efficacy refers to teachers' situation-specific expectation that they can help pupils learn. Teachers' efficacy expectations influence their thoughts and feelings, their choice of activities, the amount of effort they expend, and the extent of their persistence in the face of obstacles (Bandura, 1981). Teachers with a low sense of efficacy are less effective as their attention is diverted from their teaching to concern about their personal competence. On the contrary, teachers with a strong sense of efficacy believe that they are capable of affecting pupil performance.

Teachers' sense of efficacy consists of two independent dimensions: sense of teaching efficacy and sense of personal teaching efficacy. Teachers integrate their expectations from these two dimensions into a course of action.

Sense of Teaching Efficacy

The dimension of teachers' sense of efficacy refers to teachers' expectations that teaching can influence student learning. Teachers differ in the extent to which they believe that teaching can affect student performance, despite external obstacles such as family background and student ability.

Sense of Personal Teaching Efficacy

This dimension of teacher efficacy refers to individuals' assessment of their own teaching competence, i.e. teachers' perceptions of their own teaching competence. Teachers' perceptions of their own teaching abilities influence their choice of classroom management and instructional strategies. Generally, teachers will avoid situations in which they doubt their ability to perform successfully.

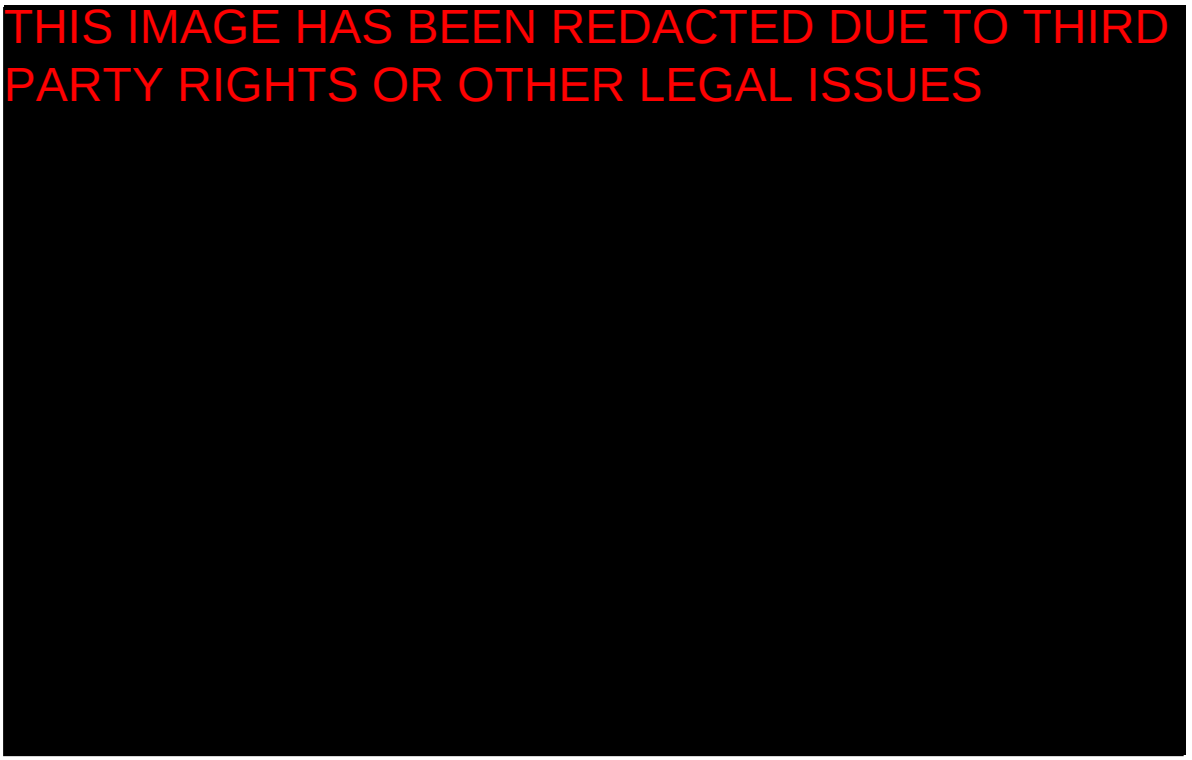
A Model of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

Ashton & Webb (1986) offer the following model of hierarchically organised relationships that comprise teachers' sense of efficacy presented in Figure 3.1.

At the top of the model are generalised beliefs about response-outcome contingencies. These beliefs refer to the extent to which the teacher believes that actions can produce desired outcomes. Teachers' sense of teaching efficacy is derived, at least in part, from their more general beliefs about response-outcome contingencies and, consequently, is represented below the more general category of outcome-response beliefs. Similarly, teachers' general sense of effectiveness as a person is dependent on response-outcome beliefs and is also represented as influenced by those beliefs. Finally, teachers' beliefs about teaching response outcomes and perceived self-efficacy are integrated to form a dimension that directly influences behaviour in specific teaching situations - their personal teaching efficacy. Experiences that directly affect the most specific level of the hierarchy, personal teacher efficacy, will be most powerful in influencing teachers' motivation and future behaviour. Other levels of the hierarchy can also influence teachers' sense of efficacy. When teachers have had no previous experience in a situation, generalised expectations of outcome response and personal efficacy will be important determinants of their behaviour.

Ashton & Webb (1986) assume that reciprocal relationships exist among the various levels of the efficacy hierarchy. For example, if teachers are successful in getting across a difficult concept to students they believed could not learn it, they may modify both their personal assessment of their ability to teach such students (sense of personal teaching efficacy) and their belief that such students cannot be taught (sense of teaching efficacy).

Figure 3.1 A Multidimensional Construct of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy



(from Ashton & Webb, 1986)

3.3.1 The Distinction between Teachers' Sense of Teaching Efficacy and Personal Teaching Efficacy

The distinction between teaching efficacy and personal efficacy is important, because appropriate interventions depend on which dimension of teachers' sense of efficacy is low. If teachers' sense of efficacy is low because they believe their students cannot learn, changing their expectations requires evidence that, in fact, they can positively affect the performance of their students. On the other hand, if teachers' low sense of efficacy is based on the belief that they lack skills needed to teach low-achieving

students, their sense of efficacy will be altered only if they learn teaching skills that they can see from experience make a difference in student learning.

Research on learned helplessness (Abramson *et al.*, 1978) suggests a further distinction between a low sense of teaching efficacy and a low sense of personal teaching efficacy. Teachers with a low sense of teaching efficacy are likely to experience what Abramson *et al.* call universal helplessness. Such teachers do not expect that they, or any other teacher, will have much effect on the achievement of their students who are low-achievers, and it is difficult for them to learn that such students can be helped.

Teachers with a low sense of personal teaching efficacy are likely to experience personal helplessness. Like those who doubt the efficacy of teaching, they are unsure of their ability to teach students. However, instead of placing the responsibility for low achievement on the shoulders of the students themselves, they share the blame for student failure. They are quite sure that low-achieving students could learn if only they were better teachers and more knowledgeable, talented, and dedicated.

In the two studies sponsored by the Rand Corporation in the U.S.A.(Armor *et al.*, 1976; Berman *et al.*, 1977), teachers' sense of efficacy is defined as 'the extent to which the teacher believed he or she had the capacity to affect student performance' (p.137). Early in their research Ashton & Webb found that teachers' scores on *Teaching Efficacy* and *Personal Teaching Efficacy* were not significantly correlated (Ashton *et al.*, 1982). Consideration of the differences suggested the conceptual distinction between *Teaching Efficacy* and *Personal Teaching Efficacy. Teaching Efficacy* corresponded to an outcome expectation of the efficacy of teaching, and *Personal Teaching Efficacy* refers to the teachers' specific assessment of personal competence. Since the discovery that teachers' scores on the two items were not correlated, Ashton & Webb treated teachers' scores on the two items as separate dimensions.

According to Bandura, self-efficacy is a cognitive mechanism that regulates behaviour. A sense of self-efficacy develops as an individual acquires a conviction of personal competence; that is, when the individual believes he or she has mastered the behaviours necessary to achieve a desired outcome. The strength of an individual's sense of self-efficacy determines whether he or she will initiate or sustain a behaviour in the face of

difficulties. The individual's expectations of personal efficacy influence future learning and motivation. Bandura contended that behaviour is controlled by the individual's personal efficacy beliefs rather than by the presence of reinforcing consequences. Studies of learning in children support Bandura's contention that successful performance alone does not guarantee behaviour change (Schunk, 1984). For example, Dweck (1976) and Dweck & Leggett (1988) found that giving successful experiences to children who had a history of failure did not improve their motivation. Only after children underwent training in which they were taught to take responsibility for their failure and attribute it to insufficient effort were they able to improve their performance.

Teachers with a low sense of efficacy doubt their capabilities to influence students' learning. They avoid planning activities that they believe exceed their capabilities. They may not persist in helping students having difficulty learning, expend additional effort to find materials, or think of ways to reteach content in ways that students might understand better. In contrast, teachers with higher self-efficacy might be likely to develop challenging activities to work on in the classroom and help students succeed on these tasks. Teachers' self-efficacy could influence not only teachers' behaviours but also student achievement.

3.3.2 Teachers' Subjective Perceptions

Studies of teacher effectiveness have not examined teachers' goals or their perceptions of their teaching situation (Medley, 1979). Fenstermacher (1979) pointed out the problem arising from the failure of teacher-effectiveness researchers to examine teachers' subjective perceptions. Teachers behave as they do because of subjectively held beliefs that their behaviours are appropriate. They will maintain those behaviours unless evidence is presented that challenges their subjectively reasonable beliefs. Teachers' sense of efficacy refers to a subjectively reasonable belief. In the first part the focus of this study moves away from the traditional research focus on teacher behaviour and explores the subjective perceptions of teachers regarding their sense of preparation and competence. Ashton & Webb (1986) recognise that the study of

teachers' sense of efficacy requires an exploration of the subjective perceptions of teachers.

3.4 Self-Ratings of Perceived Preparation and Competence

One of the important prerequisites of successful teaching is preparation and confidence in one's preparation (Housego, 1990b). The study reported in the next chapter compares the self-ratings of preparation to teach of final year Student Teachers, First Year Teachers and More Experienced Teachers (with two to four years of teaching experience) in Malta. Self-ratings of competence are sought too to establish whether there is a match or mismatch between Perceived Preparation and Competence.

Bandura (1986, p.391) described the 'judgement of one's capacity to accomplish a certain level of performance' as an important individual personal characteristic or disposition that he termed 'self-efficacy'. In an earlier work (1981, pp. 205-209), he explained that self-efficacy may stem from enactive sources (based on performance achievements), vicarious sources (based on verbal persuasion by others), and emotive sources (based on physiological arousal). A student teacher who felt prepared to teach might be expected to derive self-efficacy feelings regarding teaching from successful teacher education experiences (Housego, 1992). Feelings of preparation to teach might be assumed to be important to the execution of successful teaching. From the perspective of Atkinson's (1964) expectancy motivational theory, feeling prepared to teach can be seen as a perceived probability of success. In Atkinson's equation the perceived probability of or chance of success is multiplied by the incentive value of success to determine motivation. Feeling prepared to teach can therefore be seen to be an important aspect of the motivation of Student Teachers along with the incentive value attached to teaching. A teacher's acquisition of feelings of preparation to teach can be explained in the same manner as the acquisition of feelings of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1981). Opportunities to teach provide an enactive source of feelings of competence to teach. When a student teacher observes others teaching and envisions him/herself in that role, the experience is a vicarious source of feelings of preparation to teach. Persuasive sources of feelings of competence to teach come into play when the student teacher is literally persuaded by others that he or she can be a successful teacher. In a

teacher education programme, university tutors, mentor teachers and fellow students provide such encouragement. Student teachers tap also emotive sources of feelings of competence to teach. There is an excitement produced by an approaching period of teaching practice as well as happiness over success and frustration over failure.

Self-efficacy also affects and is affected by the educational environment in which the teacher functions. Theoretically, greater feelings of self-efficacy about teaching lead to improved teaching behaviours and a richer learning environment. In turn, a richer educational environment may stimulate more effective teaching to which pupils may respond with improved motivation and therefore augment a teacher's self-efficacy regarding teaching. According to Bandura (1978, p.345), psychological functioning 'involves a continuous reciprocal interaction between behavioural, cognitive and environmental influences.' Therefore, self-estimates of one's capacity to perform specific teaching tasks can be seen as an important cognitive influence on teaching behaviours and on the educational environment. Bandura (1977, p.191) hypothesised that self-efficacy 'determines whether coping behaviour will be initiated, how much effort will be expended, and how long it will persist in the face of aversive experiences.' This hypothesis has been interpreted, tested, and supported in a variety of educational contexts (Ashton & Webb, 1986).

Applying prescription to practice, Boulianne and Weston based two studies on the perceptions of former graduates and practitioners. Weston (1982) surveyed practising instructional developers to analyse their competencies in relation to their training programmes. Boulianne and Weston (1983) used a modification of this approach to analyse the relationship between a specific course content and the practices of classroom teachers. In both cases useful data were obtained regarding the relationship among competencies, course content, and the needs of practising professionals. Boulianne and Weston (1987) surveyed 204 secondary teachers in Ecuador to examine the discrepancy between their Perceived Preparation and their perceptions of the importance of various topics covered by their teacher education. The list of 46 items included in the questionnaire were divided in three sections: 1) *Instructional Process*, 2) *Foundations* and 3) *Other Professional Attitudes and Activities*. The majority of the items considered most important were from the *Instructional Process* category. On the other hand, of the items for which the teachers felt they had received better preparation, only a few were from this category. The most serious problem, as perceived by these

teachers, in their preparation was in the *Instructional Process* category. This did not imply that all was well necessarily in the other two areas, but that the most serious problem was perceived to be in the preparation of those specific teaching skills essential to the practitioners, such as instructional methods and techniques of evaluation. The results in general do raise questions about the relationship of preparation of professionals by universities and the real needs of practitioners. The earlier studies by Weston (1982) and Boulianne (1983) revealed gaps in the relationship between preparation and practice for other groups of teachers.

Housego (1990b) focuses on student teachers' feelings of preparedness to perform tasks central to the role of the teacher and measured on the PREP Scale (Housego, 1990b). student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach in the first term of a new teacher education programme, September to December 1987, were compared with those of their counterparts at comparable points in the old programme, September 1986 to April 1987. Feelings of preparedness to teach were monitored in terms of secondary subject specialisation, primary programme specialisation, gender differences, as well as levels of preparation (primary, intermediate, or secondary) subgroups. Both primary and secondary Student Teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach increased significantly during the first term of both the new and the old teacher education programmes. At the end of the first term, however, new programme student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach were significantly greater than those of old programme Student Teachers at a comparable point in their programme. At this point, new programme student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach were at a level comparable to that reached by old programme students near the end of their teacher education programme.

Housego (1992) assessed student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach and teacher efficacy. Both constructs were monitored during the first offering of a primary teacher education programme in the University of British Columbia (1987-1989). Total group feelings of preparedness to teach increased significantly in every term except the last, but increases did not occur for all subgroups. Male Student Teachers' measures of preparedness did not increase significantly during any term. At the end of every term, except the first, female Student Teachers felt significantly more prepared to teach than males. Measures of preparedness did not increase significantly in any term for one other subgroup, students majoring in multicultural education. The findings regarding

teacher efficacy revealed some parallels, most notably across four terms, a significant lessening of expectations regarding what can be accomplished through teaching.

In Miklos & Greene (1987), graduates of Alberta (Canada) teacher education programmes were surveyed to determine the extent to which their pre-service preparation provided them with the knowledge and skills required for effective teaching. Teachers viewed programmes as having more potential to develop knowledge and understanding than skills. Preparation programmes were rated as most effective in the areas in which teachers considered them to have the highest potential; however, these areas were not highly important to teachers in their daily work. Practicums were judged to be the most significant component of teacher preparation. The significance attached to other education components was related directly to the degree to which they were judged to be practical. Results of the study raised issues related to the general orientation of pre-service teacher education programmes.

Newton & Brathwaite (1987) solicited the opinions of teachers and faculty on University of the West Indies teacher education courses about importance of teaching skills and programme effectiveness. Interpersonal, curriculum and evaluative skills were found to be the most important. The high importance of interpersonal skills applied only to interactions with students. Interactions with other teachers and parents was consistently lowest in importance. Other low priorities were managerial and methodological skills. Few significant differences were found between teachers and teaching staff on the teacher education courses. In general programme effectiveness showed strong positive correlation with order of importance skills, contrasting with the tendency to negative correlations in the literature reviewed. High involvement of faculty in classroom activity is considered a possible factor influencing these results.

3.5 The Present Study

The examination of the historical and social-cultural context of teacher education in Malta, in the preceding chapters has made possible a consideration of its evolution as a consequence of multifarious historical, political and socio-cultural forces. These forces have combined to make the Maltese teacher education model what it is today: a model

which is a combination of elements of the diverse models teased out earlier on. This state of affairs has influenced the way in which the various issues in initial teacher education, like the relationship between theory and practice, and the training institution and schools, Teaching Practice, etc. have been perceived by the various players in the teacher education enterprise in Malta, namely student teachers, teachers, teacher Educators and employers. Of particular relevance in understanding the structure and process of initial teacher education is the link between preparation and competence, especially in the first years of teaching, as demonstrated by the Structure and Process of Initial Teacher Education project (SPITE) [see page 60] and the HMI work (1982, 1988).

One of the main aims of the present study is to match perceptions about the preparation obtained on the training course to perceptions about competence on the job in the relevant aspects of teaching in the context of Maltese schools. Through this, an attempt is made to match the student teachers' and beginning teachers' own assessments of their training to their perceived competence on the job. The present study attempts also to investigate the perceptions of preparation and competence of the student teachers and beginning teachers, the student teachers and the teacher educators, and the first year teachers and the assessment of education officers. The analysis concentrates upon specific aspects of teaching in a bid to match these aspects of the training process to perceived competence on the job.

In the second study an attempt is made to establish differences in the teaching practice of a small sample of beginning teachers (who were observed in the classroom situation) according to the typology of beginning teachers identified in the first study.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SURVEY STUDY

4.1 Rationale

The Faculty of Education of the University of Malta has since its inception in 1978 been the only teacher education institution in the Maltese Islands. This situation offers the opportunity to establish a match between the training and the practice in the schools. This would not have been possible within a situation where a multiplicity of training programmes exists. Also, the highly centralised system of schooling in Malta has ensured a high level of homogeneity of Maltese schools, especially in the state sector.

The examination of the development from being a student teacher to being a beginning regular teacher in the classroom enables one to identify gaps between what the beginning teacher knows on a theoretical level and what she or he does on a practical level (Corcoran, 1981). The lack of goodness-of-fit between its pre-service curriculum and the performance of its graduates needs to be a major focus of concern for a teacher education institution.

4.2 The Setting

Malta presents us with a complete and compact context that contains all the characteristics of an educational system. It is sufficiently large to represent a whole system, but sufficiently self-contained to allow all the target groups to be included in the study. It was therefore possible to include the whole of Malta in the study. The

Faculty of Education is the only teacher training institution on the island. For the last fifteen years the B.Ed.(Hons) degree course has been the main form of initial teacher education in Malta. Hence the focus on this course. Throughout the four years that the students spend on their teacher training course they have four periods of teaching practice of five weeks each. In the first year they are sent to a primary school, in the second year they can choose whether they go to a primary or a secondary school, in the third year to a secondary school and in the fourth year they can choose again. Currently the teaching practice sessions are supervised solely by the tutors from the university, although there is now a call for greater involvement from practising teachers in the supervision of intending teachers. In the induction year after the completion of the teacher training course, when the beginning teachers are on their first teaching job, the supervisory role is assumed completely by the Education Officers of the Department of Education with no attempt at linking the two phases.

The role of the Education Officers is very much of quality assurance in that they monitor the quality of the teaching of the beginning teacher and try to determine the efficiency of the teacher in question. They make practical suggestions about teaching and classroom management strategies. At the end of the first year, which is considered to be a probationary one, they draw up a report about the teacher. This report may be taken into consideration by the Department of Education in connection with future promotions. Often the posting of new graduates to their first teaching position is very much determined by the existing vacancies irrespective of the subject-specialisation followed by the student teacher on the training course.

4.3 Introduction

This study set out to investigate, within the framework of the first years of teaching, student and beginning teachers' perceptions of preparation to teach. These have been examined within the perspective of Bandura's (1986) efficacy theory as applied to teaching by Ashton and Webb (1986). It links perceptions of preparedness to teach with the concept of personal teaching efficacy. Perceptions of preparation to teach have been investigated by means of the Perceived Preparation Questionnaire. From this reciprocal deterministic perspective the perceptions that beginning teachers have of their

preparation is likely to affect their confidence in their competence to teach and their performance (Housego, 1990a & 1990b). Confidence in competence to teach has been investigated by means of the Perceived Competence Questionnaire. The link between perceptions of preparation and competence and actual classroom performance was subsequently established for a sub-sample of the beginning teachers.

A primary concern of the present study was to examine to what extent final year Student teachers and beginning teachers thought they were being adequately prepared for teaching by the teacher education course run by the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta. In conjunction with this the Perceived Competence of these groups was examined in order to establish to what extent the feelings of Perceived Competence of beginning teachers in their first teaching posts varied from that of final year Student teachers and teachers with a few years of teaching experience.

The first phase of the research consisted of a study designed to examine to what extent final year Student teachers, First year teachers and beginning teachers with a few years of teaching experience feel that the B. Ed.(Hons) course run by the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta prepares them to teach. In turn these groups were asked about how competent they felt they were at teaching. The perceptions of the course of the Student teachers are compared to those of the Teacher Educators. The relationship between self-estimates of competence and observable teacher behaviours, as assessed by a group of external judges, the Education Officers, is then examined.

The design of the second study emerged from the analysis of data gathered during the first phase, and consisted of an observation study of a small subgroup of first year primary teachers, designed to examine the relationship between self-estimates of competence in teaching of primary first year beginning teachers and their instructional practice. Many methodologists (e.g., Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Smith, 1979) have noted that multiple data sources should be consulted in building a comprehensive conceptual framework.

4.4 The Research Questions

When reviewing research on the development of expertise in classroom teaching during initial training and in the first year of teaching Kyriacou (1993) indicated that one of the questions that have proved hard to deal with in this field of research has been the relationship between the training experiences offered and the development of expertise. This present study has sought to address this issue by examining the relationship between preparation and competence of beginning teachers as they are perceived by the student teachers and beginning teachers themselves. The effects of increased teaching experience on different aspects of teaching skills are investigated. Primary and secondary teachers are also compared. The interplay between perceptions of preparation and competence for both student and beginning teachers is examined.

In the light of the above the specific aims of the first study are:

1) to determine to what extent final year student teachers, first year teachers and more experienced teachers with a few years of teaching experience feel that the B.Ed.(Hons) course run by the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta prepares them to teach and what are the differences between these groups;

2) to establish to what extent the feelings of perceived competence of beginning teachers in their first teaching posts varied from those of student teachers and more experienced teachers with a few years of teaching experience;

3) to examine the relationship between ratings on Perceived preparation and perceived competence for each group. Primary and secondary sub-groups are also considered.

4) to examine perceived preparation through the views of teacher educators who implement the course. This information can validate responses to the student questionnaires.

5) to examine perceived competence through the ratings of education officers. This information can validate the responses to the first year teachers' questionnaire.

The way in which student teachers and beginning teachers perceive their preparation may affect the way that they perceive their competence in teaching. Perceptions of preparation and competence may indicate to what extent the respondents feel that their preparation has contributed to their competence, and to what extent the theory of their course was related to their teaching practice. High self-ratings of preparation and competence in an area may suggest that competence derives in the main from preparation. A mismatch between the two may indicate a lack of transfer from preparation to competence or a level of competence which does not derive entirely from preparation but from a number of sources.

The use of different but homogeneous cohorts in this study has enabled us to examine the changing patterns of perceived preparation and competence with the shift from training to full-time teaching and with increased teaching experience. Comparisons across cohorts enabled us to determine what fluctuations in perceived preparation and competence occur in the various teacher education curricular areas with increased teaching experience. Figure 4.1 presents the groups of respondents, the research instruments and the cross-validations employed.

4.5 The Methodology Employed

In any research study there needs to be correspondence between epistemology, theory and method. The distinction between quantitative and qualitative approaches to research is most commonly applied at the level of method, the process of data collection and the form in which the data are recorded and analysed. Researchers are often required to do balancing acts between a number of pragmatic considerations-disciplinary, organisational and those related to the funding context.

Platt (1986) asserted that every research method implies a theoretical position, whether or not that is stated by the user. The general assertion that method implies a theoretical position depends on a number of implicit assumptions. First, there is an assumption about the intrinsic nature of methods and theories: any one implies only one member of the other class, or at least is only compatible with a limited range of its members. Second, there is the assumption that fundamental theoretical commitments necessarily

Figure 4.1 Groups of Respondents and Research Instruments

	Groups and Numbers of Respondents				
	Student Teachers	First Year Teachers	More Experienced Teachers	Teacher Educators	Education Officers
Research Instrument					
Perceived Preparation Questionnaire	**72***	135	146		
Teacher Educator Questionnaire				**28***	
Perceived Competence Questionnaire	72		146		
Education Officers' Rating Schedule					

* Comparisons concerning the teacher education course

** Comparisons between Observed and Perceived Competence of the First Year Teachers

determine particular sociological practices. Third, there is the assumption that everyone has fundamental theoretical considerations, preferably but not necessarily conscious ones, with which to determine their practices.

The general view is that quantitative and qualitative methods represent distinctive approaches to social research. Each approach is associated with a certain cluster of methods of data collection: quantitative research is strongly associated with social survey techniques like structured interviewing and self-administered questionnaires, experiments, structured observations, content analysis, the analysis of official statistics, etc. Qualitative research is typically associated with participant observation, semi- and unstructured interviewing, focus groups, the qualitative examination of texts, and various language-based techniques like conversation and discourse analysis.

Quantitative approaches isolate and define variables and variable categories. These variables are linked together to frame hypotheses often before the data are collected, and are then tested upon the data. The instrument is a pre-determined and finely-tuned technological tool. Like in the case of questionnaires, for example, the research issue is clearly defined and the questions put to respondents require unambiguous answers. Enumerative induction is used to discover how many and what kinds of people in the general or parent population have a particular characteristic which has been found to exist in the sample population. Hence in the sample, characteristics of the parent population are accurately reflected. Where statistical inferences are made concerning the linking of two characteristics in the parent population the inference is only about concomitant variation of the two characteristics. Sieber (1973) claims that as a rule, the more knowledgeable the questionnaire designer about his ultimate population, the more sophisticated the instrument and the smoother its administration.

Quantitative approaches can provide authoritative survey data and relate diverse factors. They can also assess the incidence, epidemiology (spread) and boundaries of problems of the situation under scrutiny. Within such an approach it is possible to compare areas of the country and sub-groups or sets of factors can be selected for further consideration. Such work contributes to policy development at an administrative level, such as in the framing of legislation, the planning of services and monitoring the implementation of change.

The survey is one of the main methods of data collection which embodies the features of quantitative research. The survey's capacity for generating quantifiable data on large numbers of people who are known to be representative of a wider population in order to test theories or hypotheses has been viewed by many practitioners as a means of capturing many of the ingredients of a science. The survey is an appropriate and useful means of gathering information under three conditions: when the goals of the research call for quantitative data, when the information sought is reasonably specific and familiar to the respondents, and when the researcher himself has considerable prior knowledge of particular problems and the range of responses likely to emerge.

Bryant (1974) has noted the tendency for the individual to be the centre of attention for researchers. In large part, this focus derives from the fact that survey instruments are administered to individuals as discrete objects of inquiry. Their responses are then aggregated to form overall measures for the sample. There is no requirement that individuals should know each other, only that their survey responses can be added up. Such an approach has often been referred to somewhat disparagingly as 'aggregate psychology' (e.g. Coleman *et al.*, 1966), since it engenders a view of society as if it 'were only an aggregation of disparate individuals' (Blumer, 1969, p. 546). While writers like Coleman *et al.*, (1966) have recognised that this orientation is inappropriate to the study of patterns of relationships or interactions (for which different forms of sampling like snowball samples may be necessary), the emphasis within the survey tradition on random sampling and the administration of elegant research instruments to 'disparate individuals' has produced a pervasive individualism.

Through the careful and purposeful combination of different methods, breadth and depth are added to the analysis (Fielding and Fielding, 1986). If the purpose of the classroom fieldwork is to clarify or extend a survey finding, then it must be conducted after the survey. These are considerations of 'time ordering', the stage in the research process at which the respective methods come into play or cease to be in evidence. The most common usage of fieldwork is as an exemplar of quantitative findings, especially in the fleshing out of categories of variables.

Information that is gathered in the course of fieldwork can assist in the analysis and interpretation of survey data in several ways. First, the theoretical structure that guides the analysis can be derived wholly or largely from qualitative fieldwork. Second, as

emphasised by Webb *et al.* (1966), certain of the survey results can be validated, or at least given persuasive plausibility, by recourse to observations and informant interviews. Third, statistical relationships can be interpreted by reference to field observations. Fourth, the selection of survey items for the construction of indices can be based on field observations. Fifth, external validation of statistical constructs (indices) is afforded by comparison with observational scales. Sixth, case studies that illustrate statistical and historical types are supplied by field protocols. Seventh, provocative but puzzling replies to the questionnaire can be clarified by resort to field notes.

Often the researcher does not have in hand the additional information necessary for measuring the further variables. Since it is extremely rare for a survey researcher to re-enter the field for intensive interviewing after the completion of a survey, the needed information is almost never collected. Surveys contribute to data collection in fieldwork by correcting for the elite bias in the interpretation of events, and by providing information about the informants or subjects who were overlooked. There are other contributions, too, providing that the survey is conducted prior to fieldwork. Replies to survey questions provide leads for later interviews and observations and eliminate the need to ask routine 'background' questions. They thereby afford greater realism, enhance rapport, and offer guidelines for probes. It has been claimed that surveys should be actuated by specific problems or hypotheses, while fieldwork is uniquely qualified for exploratory investigations.

We have seen in the preceding sections how the overriding paradigm for the Maltese B.Ed.(Hons) has been very much a behaviouristic one, resting upon the foundations of a positivistic epistemology and behaviourist psychology. It emphasises the development of specific and observable skills of teaching which are assumed to be related to pupil learning. The methodology of this research study, which included survey questionnaires administered to various cohorts was suited to the style of teacher training in Malta. Over the years some 'progressive individuals' have made attempts to render parts of the course more inquiry-oriented. However, these attempts have remained very specific to certain parts of the course for which these individuals have special responsibilities and have not as yet been adopted for all of the course.

The use of the survey questionnaires enabled an efficient and efficacious examination of the views about preparation and competence of a large number of respondents which included the whole Maltese population of final year Student teachers, First year teachers, teachers with two to four years of teaching experience, Teacher Educators and Education Officers. The use of similar items for the questionnaires enabled the matching of the views on preparation and competence of the various cohorts.

The use of observation and descriptive instruments in the second study provided the opportunity for a closer examination of the classroom performance of a small sub-sample of primary First year teachers who were rated according to their level of Perceived Competence.

4.6 Selection of Samples

An initial concern of the present study was to determine to what extent final year Student Teachers, First Year Teachers and beginning teachers with two to four years of teaching experience feel that the B.Ed.(Hons) course run by the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta prepares them to teach and whether there are differences between these groups. Another concern was to examine the match between self-ratings of preparation and competence in teaching of three different groups: 72 final year Student Teachers, 135 First Year Teachers, and 146 teachers with two to four years of teaching experience. These samples were selected on the basis that they were the total number of final year students, First Year Teachers and teachers with two to four years of teaching experience, who had undergone the B.Ed.(Hons) degree course at the time of data-collection.

In order to determine the match between the perceptions about the course of Teacher Educators and Student Teachers, 28 Teacher Educators, who make up the lecturing complement of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta, were surveyed about their perceptions of the levels of preparation afforded to students by the B.Ed. (Hons) degree course. The 23 Education Officers, of the Department of Education at the Maltese Ministry of Education, were asked to rate the competence of the cohort of First Year Teachers, who were the most recent graduates.

4.6.1 The Decision to use Student Teachers and Former Graduates

Various teacher education institutions have focused on graduates' perceptions of the quality of their teacher preparation as one indicator of possible strengths and weaknesses of the course (e.g. AACTE/ISU, 1984).

The decision to use former graduates of the programme for the survey was based on evidence in the literature on evaluation which supports the use of students or graduates, the consumers of programmes, as a source of data (Provus, 1971; Pratt, 1980; Donald, 1988). Pratt (1980) writes:

> 'Recent graduates are a fruitful and frequently overlooked source for commentary on the curriculum. They are now finding out how their learning applies to life. Graduates were a major source of data in the research leading to the Swedish curriculum reforms of the 1960s.' (p.83)

Boulianne and Weston (1987) note that:

> 'Those involved in this process (curriculum reform) might find it useful to gather data from the consumers first to investigate how much the perceived problems may be due to curriculum content and structure and how much to the poor application and execution of existing curricula.' (p. 17)

Provus (1971), for example, notes that the opinion of those affected by a programme has 'the advantage of providing first hand accounts of programme strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of those close to programme operations' (p.10). Donald (1988) agrees with this process and supports her argument by quoting another authority on evaluation: 'Stake thus brought the focus of evaluation back to the consumers or concerned constituents of the programme'. Other researchers have based their studies on the perceptions of former graduates and practitioners. Weston (1982) surveyed practising instructional developers to analyse their competencies in relation to their training programmes. Boulianne and Weston (1983) used a modification of this approach to analyse the relationship between a specific course content and the practices of classroom teachers. In both cases useful data were obtained regarding the relationship between competencies, course content, and the needs of practising professionals.

Others have surveyed the views of student teachers and teachers about various modes of training courses. Swanwick (1991) reported the views of 53 student teachers and 198 teachers involved in an initial training course in Britain concerning the contributions made by the university tutors and by the teachers in the schools to the students' training experience during the school-based component of the course, and their views concerning the implications of a totally school-based training course. Ginsburg (1988) based his analysis of competency-based training courses in the USA on student teachers' views.

4.7 Design of Survey Questionnaires

In the first instance a number of questionnaires were used in order to survey the target groups. The size of the various groups in question was manageable in terms of implementing a survey. In this initial stage it was necessary to obtain information about the whole Maltese population of final year Student Teachers, beginning teachers in their first five years of teaching, Teacher Educators and Education Officers. A measure of the respondent's perceived effectiveness of training and teaching competence was employed.

The questionnaires were designed after a review of a number of instruments employed in similar studies in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. No work of this type had been carried out in Malta previously. The structures of the questionnaires and rating schedules were based in the main on those used in the United Kingdom in surveys about the new teacher in the school conducted by HM Inspectors (HMI, 1982, 1988). The HMI work investigated how newly trained teachers (probationers) in England and Wales fare in the first year of teaching. The HM Inspectors involved in the studies sought to assess how well these First Year Teachers were equipped for the work they are assigned in their first posts, and to judge the extent to which schools make the best use of skills, knowledge and training that they bring to their first posts. In the case of the questionnaires used in this study, modifications were made to the questions to reflect the Maltese situation and the items were derived from the various components of the curriculum of the B.Ed. (Hons) degree course run by the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta. The areas selected were those which were observable in the

classroom and school situation and which the intending and beginning teachers could rate in terms of both Preparation and Competence. These included: the role of language in learning, questioning techniques, programme planning, assessment, the teaching of various ability groups, administrative and pastoral duties, use of audio-visual equipment, equal opportunities, liaison with parents and the various subject areas. Some of the items do not necessarily refer to distinct parts of the B.Ed. (Hons) course while others refer to specific units. Three item groupings could be distinguished: Classroom-specific items, More General Professional Items, Subject-specific items. These instruments consisted of a questionnaire, made up of similar items for:

- Student Teachers who were in their fourth and final year of their B.Ed.(Hons) degree in 1992 (Student Teachers),
- Beginning Teachers in their first year of teaching (First Year Teachers)
- Beginning Teachers with two to four years of teaching experience (More Experienced Teachers)
- Teacher Educators, and
- Education Officers.

The groups of students and teachers were also asked about the assistance that they received and the problems they came across when teaching (reported on page 77). The main sections of the questionnaires related to their perceptions about the levels of preparation offered by their training course and present levels of teaching competence.

The Teacher Educators were asked to rate the various skills related to the teacher training course. The Education Officers were asked to complete a rating schedule for each student that they were monitoring on his or her first year of teaching after graduation from the B.Ed. (Hons) course. All four groups were given the opportunity to make further comments about the various components of the teacher training course through a number of open-ended questions.

4.7.1 Pilot-Testing of Questionnaires

In order to ensure content and face validation and for response trial and for comment on the suitability and readability of the items the various questionnaires were field-tested with a number of individuals who were as similar to the larger population as possible. The questionnaire for Student Teachers was field-tested with twenty-five third-year students. The one for beginning teachers was field-tested with twenty-five B.Ed.(Hons) graduates who had been teaching for five years. In both cases the spread of ratings on the items was fairly normally distributed (See Appendix I p. 264). The Teacher Educator Questionnaire was presented to three lecturers from the Faculty of Education, two who were currently away from their job for further studies and another lecturer who had retired recently. The questionnaire and rating schedule for Education Officers were presented to three ex-officers who had retired recently or moved into another post. The comments made by the various respondents were largely about the format in which the questionnaires were presented and the wording of a small number of items. There were no objections to any of the items and no drastic changes were called for. A number of slight amendments were made to the format of some of the questionnaires and the wording of some items was modified in order to render them more clear. The main comment made by respondents was that they felt that the questionnaires were very comprehensive as they covered all the aspects of the teacher training course. This is an advantage that 'insider' researchers have in that they are in a good position to be thoroughly familiar with the issues involved. Regarding the Education Officers' rating schedule the departmental officials expressed the view that it would be very desirable if the officers were to adopt these schedules on a regular basis. The researcher had to reiterate that he preferred them to use the instrument for the task at hand and to leave it up to the individuals concerned whether they wanted to adopt the schedule on a more regular basis. Some of them went on to do this. In fact the researcher felt that he stood a better chance of obtaining the co-operation of all those concerned if the questionnaires and schedules were seen as his personal business rather than as something official from the Department or the Faculty. In retrospect it does seem that this strategy has paid off in terms of the high rates of returns that were registered.

In an effort to ensure the content validity of the scale, items were developed to address the content of the Bachelor of Education degree course. Also, as a confirmatory measure for the construct validity of the questionnaires, a series of factor analyses were employed to determine how well the items in each questionnaire represented the content areas of the course (Child, 1979) when all data were available for analysis. In the case of the questionnaire concerning self-ratings of preparation two factors which accounted for 50.7% of the variance were elicited. For the questionnaire in self-ratings in competence two factors which accounted for 54.9% of the variance were elicited (see Appendix V, p. 381).

4.7.2 Biographical Information about the Sample

The first part of the questionnaire distributed to the students and beginning teachers was intended to gather biographical information, and information about the problems encountered by them, their sources of assistance when teaching, their attitudes towards the components of their training course and their career satisfaction, commitment and intention (see Appendix II, p. 267).

The student teachers and beginning teachers were requested to provide biographical data concerning their age and sex. They were asked also to indicate their B.Ed.(Hons) options and to provide information regarding the age groups they had taught (in the case of Student Teachers on their Teaching Practice sessions). They were also requested to give information about the problems they encountered and sources of any assistance received during these sessions. Further sections were concerned with the balance of the training course, career satisfaction, intention and commitment. At the end of the questionnaire a set of open-ended questions was posed to elicit information about teaching practice, teaching of main subjects and Methodology, the pastoral care of students and the training course in general.

For the sections of the questionnaires that requested biographical and general information a straight count for each questionnaire item was taken. Each response was allocated one score. This basic information provides information about the specific characteristics of Maltese student and beginning teachers within which to place in

context the information about the Perceived Preparation and Competence of these groups.

4.7.3 The Perceived Preparation Questionnaire (PPQ)

An initial list of professional competencies taught by the Faculty of Education was prepared from the objectives and content of the education courses of the pedagogical section of the curriculum. The respondents were asked to provide self-ratings of the extent to which they felt that they had been prepared by their pre-service training course. This questionnaire which consisted of 26 items was scored on a five-point Likert type scale anchored at one end by 'very well prepared' and at the other end by 'not prepared at all' (see Appendix II, p. 267). Responses were assigned from 1 to 5 points, high scores indicating greater preparation. A student who answered 'very well prepared' on every item would thus score 130 points, while one responding 'not prepared at all' on every item would score 26 points.

4.7.4 The Perceived Competence Questionnaire (PCQ)

The Perceived Competence Questionnaire consisted of the same 26 items as the Perceived Preparation Questionnaire. The respondents were asked to provide self-estimates of their competence in teaching. The 26 questionnaire items were likewise scored on a five-point Likert-scale anchored at one end by 'very competent' and on the other end by 'incompetent'. Responses were assigned from 1 to 5 points, high scores indicating greater competence. A student who answered 'very competent' on every item would thus score 130 points, while one responding 'incompetent' on every item would score 26 points. The same procedure was adopted for the sections (complete questionnaires are shown in Appendix II, p. 267) concerned with self-ratings of competence.

4.8 Negotiating Entry into the Field

The state schooling system in Malta is highly centralised. The Department of Education manages all affairs in schools relating to academic matters, whereas the Ministry of Education is supposed to be concerned with all matters that are not of a strictly academic nature: teachers' salaries, non-teaching staff, school transport, etc. However since the Ministry exercises more political power than the Department it has the final say in all matters. For the educational researcher who wants to gain entry into the field this has both its advantages and its disadvantages. In order to obtain permission to be able to distribute questionnaires to departmental officials and teachers and/or to conduct classroom observation one needs to be cleared by the Director of Education. The Director may in turn, as often happens, redirect the request to other senior officials who scrutinise the contents of the questionnaire or observation schedule in question. Only after anything that is found to be objectionable because of its sensitive nature is modified, would they advise the Director to issue the required permission. Fenech (1992), for example, was refused permission by the Department of Education to sift through the confidential files of a curriculum project. Only after he had appealed directly to the Minister of Education was permission granted. However, this centralised organisation provides one with access to all the schools and other departmental institutions once permission has been granted from the top.

A number of factors came to my assistance when I set about conducting the survey. At the outset the task seemed very daunting. The thought of having to produce, distribute and collect 671 questionnaires and rating schedules single-handed was overwhelming. It was only because I had a very personal interest in the subject that I undertook to do this. In my case negotiating access was facilitated as it had only been two years since I had moved from the Department to the University. I had maintained regular contact with many of my colleagues from the Department and I was not seen as somebody from the 'other side'. An important contact at the Department had been the Deputy Director of Education with whom I had collaborated on a number of projects when I had been employed by the Department. My former colleagues in the Department were now positioned within the various ranks of the Department of Education. My former personal involvement with the Department and the bearing it had on my gaining access to the field is illustrated by comments, which were made by senior officials, like: 'I am

only going to such great bother to accommodate your request and to convince my colleagues to help you as I know you personally as a very serious and hard working colleague'. However, this personal involvement with the institutions within which the study was being conducted carried with it other implications. Researchers who operate within institutions where they are well known have to avoid becoming too involved in the day-to-day concerns of the staff in order to maintain as objective a distance as possible. On one hand this privileged position presents the researcher with opportunities to gain deep insights into the social context. On the other hand I found myself expending quite some time in politely refusing to get too involved in the 'politics' of the Department and Faculty of Education, especially as many thought that in view of my present research pursuits I might now have some easy solutions to their problems.

4.9 Field Procedures

After the final versions of the various questionnaires and rating schedule were decided upon, in consultation with experts from the Institute of Education of the University of London, the task of having multiple copies printed and distributed to the various respondents began. Information about the number and particulars of final year Student Teachers, B.Ed.(Hons) graduates who had completed their degree in the last five years and Teacher Educators was obtained from the records of the Faculty of Education. The details of the Education Officers and the postings of B.Ed.(Hons) graduates were obtained from the Department of Education. The permission of the respective authorities of the Department of Education and the Faculty of Education was sought in order to be able to conduct the surveys among the members of staff of the two institutions. This involved lengthy discussions with senior officials of the Department and Faculty of Education. They went on to scrutinise all the instruments, before permission was granted.

4.10 Data Collection

Subsequently, the questionnaires were mailed to the target groups. A self-addressed stamped envelope for the return of the questionnaire was enclosed. A covering letter, to explain the purpose of the survey and to ensure strict confidence to the respondent, accompanied each questionnaire (see Appendix III, p. 295). In the first instance, the respondents were asked to return the completed questionnaires within four weeks. Two reminders were sent out, the first one two weeks and the second one four weeks after the deadline. In a highly centralised schooling system, where teachers have suffered from a long history of lack of consultation, I had many respondents calling or writing to me to demonstrate to me their appreciation for bothering to seek their opinions about their training. The numbers and percentages of questionnaires and rating schedules and the initial return rates and those received after the reminders were sent out are presented in Table 4.1.

The rate of returns proceeded at a regular pace. The sending out of two consecutive reminders, after a period of four weeks had elapsed from the distribution of questionnaires, ensured higher response rates. The collection of the education officer questionnaires and rating schedules, especially in the case of the latter, was somewhat more problematic. The Education Officers expressed to me through two of their colleagues that at the time of distribution they were somewhat overloaded with school visits and therefore, they preferred that I should extend the time for the return of the rating schedules until the end of the scholastic year. This would provide them with more time to comply with my request. I had no alternative but to comply and to encourage them to follow up their promise of co-operation, which they eventually did.

Table 4.1 Frequency and Percentage of Completed Questionnaires and Rating Schedules

GROUP	Total no. of questionnaires distributed	1st return	2nd return	**3rd return**	
Beginning Teachers (Year Group)	no.	%	%	%	no.
87-91	129	55	66	**71**	92
86-91	60	50	63	**72**	43
85-90	44	39	66	**70**	31
84-89	80	28	63	**72**	58
83-88	79	37	62	**72**	57
Sub-total	392	42	64	**72**	281
Student Teachers	96	58	66	**75**	72
Teacher Educators	32	72	81	**88**	28
Education Officers	25	0	47	**92**	23
Rating Schedules for Education Officers	135	0	0	**85**	115
TOTAL No.	671	37	57	**77**	519

CHAPTER FIVE

PERCEIVED PREPARATION AND COMPETENCE OF FINAL YEAR STUDENT TEACHERS, FIRST YEAR TEACHERS AND MORE EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

5.1 Introduction

In the following two chapters the results from the survey are presented. In order to introduce the results, a description of the cohorts is provided.

5.2 Results

5.2.1 Description and Characteristics of Cohorts

In order to obtain information about the characteristics of the sample, the final year students, the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers were questioned about their age and gender, the problems they encountered when teaching and their sources of assistance on the job. Their attitudes towards the various components of the course, their perceived attributes of an effective teacher and their career satisfaction, intention and commitment were examined.

Table 5.1 Distribution of Cohorts by Age, Gender and Level Taught

	N	Age in Years			Gender		Level Taught	
		20 - 24	25 - 29	30 and over	Female	Male	Primary	Secondary
Student Teachers (N=72)	72	66	5	1	40	32	24	48
First Year Teachers (N=135)	135	87	46	2	83	52	27	108
More Experienced Teachers (N=146)	146	0	140	6	112	34	50	96
TOTAL	353	153	191	9	235	118	101	252

In Table 5.1 the ages of the 72 final year B.Ed.(Hons) Student Teachers ranged from 20 to 30 years. 56% of them were females. The large majority of the Student Teachers (95%) had taught at secondary level during their final Teaching Practice.

The ages of the 135 First Year Teachers ranged also from 20 to over 30 years. 62% of them were females. In 1987 new educational policies, introduced following a change in government, shortened the B.Ed(Hons) course from five to four years. Thus both of the groups that had started in 1986 and 1987 completed the course in 1991.

The ages of the 146 teachers with two to four years of teaching experience ranged from 25 years to over 30 years. 77% of them were female. Overall 67% of the sample were female. The age profiles of the cohorts suggest they were all broadly comparable during their training. The drop out from the course is negligible.

Table 5.2 Sources of Assistance received by the three cohorts*

	Student Teachers (N=72)		**First Year Teachers** (N=135)		**More Experienced Teachers** (N=146)	
	Rank	No.	Rank	No.	Rank	No.
Nobody	1	28	4	16	4	11
Other Teacher	2	24	1	58	1	85
Head Teacher	3	9	2	29	2	31
Senior Teacher	4	6	3	17	3	12
University Tutor	5	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Deputy Head Teacher	6	1	5	13	6	3
Education Officer	7	0	6	2	5	4

* The actual question is presented in Appendix II, p. 267.

In Table 5.2 almost 40% of the Student Teachers claimed that they had not received any assistance from anybody on their final Teaching practice. One third had received assistance from a fellow teacher. None of them had received any assistance from the departmental Education Officers. It needs to be said here that while on Teaching Practice the progress or otherwise of the Student Teachers is seen to be the sole responsibility of the university tutors. However, only four of them felt that they had received assistance from the university tutors on their final teaching practice. The University tutor is perceived by the student teachers as being very much in the role of assessor. The tutor's role of helper is highly diminished in the eyes of the student teachers.

43% of the First Year Teachers declared that they had received assistance from a fellow teacher in their school, whereas 21% of them had received assistance from the head teacher. Only 12% reported that they had not received any assistance from anybody as compared to the 40% of Student Teachers.

In the case of the More Experienced Teachers, 58% of them had received assistance from a fellow teacher in their school. The head teacher was a source of assistance to 21% of them.

Table 5.3 Career Satisfaction of the three cohorts*

	Student Teachers (N=72)		**First Year Teachers** (N=135)		**More Experienced Teachers** (N=146)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very Well Satisfied	36	50	50	37	39	27
Well Satisfied	31	43	61	45	72	49
Moderately Satisfied	4	6	13	10	23	16
Fairly Satisfied	1	1	6	5	12	8
Not Satisfied at all	0	0	5	3	0	0

* The actual question is presented in Appendix II, p. 267.

In Table 5.3, 93% of the Final Year Students, 82% of the First Year Teachers and 76% of the More Experienced Teachers rated themselves as being either very well satisfied or well satisfied with their teaching job. The percentage of subjects who rated themselves as being very well satisfied decreased for those groups with increased teaching experience and the general overall rating of job satisfaction declined with experience.

Table 5.4 Career Intention of the three cohorts*

	Student Teachers (N=72)		**First Year Teachers** (N=135)		**More Experienced Teachers** (N=146)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Teaching as a Career	52	72	67	50	45	31
Teach for a few years	16	22	62	45	67	46
Not yet decided	3	5	5	4	19	13
Return to teach later	1	1	0	0	15	10
I do not intend to teach	0	0	1	1	0	0

* The actual question is presented in Appendix II, p. 267.

In Table 5.4, 94.4% of the Final Year Students, 95.56% of the First Year Teachers and 76.71% of the More Experienced Teachers intended to teach as a career or at least for a few years. The percentage of subjects who intended to make teaching their career decreased for those groups with increased teaching experience.

Table 5.5 Career Commitment of the three cohorts*

	Student Teachers (N=72)		**First Year Teachers** (N=135)		**More Experienced Teachers** (N=146)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very Likely	50	69	98	72	62	43
Fairly Likely	20	28	21	16	66	45
Unlikely	2	3	16	12	18	12

*Actual question is presented in Appendix II, p. 267.

In Table 5.5, 97% of the Final Year Students, 88% of the First Year Teachers and 88% of the More Experienced Teachers said they would be very likely or fairly likely to take teaching up again if given the choice.

5.2.2 Components of the teacher education course in ranked order of importance

The respondents were asked to rank the various components of the BEd (Hons) course in order of importance (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.6 Components of the BEd (Hons) course in ranked order of importance*

	Student Teachers (N=72)	**First Year Teachers** (N=135)	**More Experienced Teachers** (N=146)
	Rank	Rank	Rank
Teaching Practice	1	1	2
Philosophy of Education	2	6	3
Main Subject Specialisation	3	4.5	5
Dissertation	4	2	7
Sociology of Education	5	3	4
Psychology of Education	6	4.5	1
History of Education	7	10	10
Teaching Methodology	8.5	7	6
Classroom Observation	8.5	8	8
Micro-Teaching	10	9	9

*Actual question is presented in Appendix II, p. 267.

When asked to rank the components of the B.Ed.(Hons) course in order of importance the Student Teachers ranked Teaching Practice, Philosophy of Education and their Main Subject Specialisation as the three most important components of the course. For the First Year Teachers these were Teaching Practice, the Dissertation and Sociology of Education. The More Experienced Teachers considered Psychology of Education, Teaching Practice and Philosophy of Education as the three most important components.

It is significant that while the student and beginning teachers rank highly Teaching Practice which constitutes 'real' classroom experience, 'simulated' experience in the shape of Teaching Methodology, Classroom Observation and Micro-Teaching seems to be universally unpopular. Significant also is the way in which the More Experienced Teachers rank much more highly the Psychology of Education component. Bearing in mind that hardly any changes have occurred in the course over the years it is interesting to note how the more experienced teachers with increased teaching experience value more than the other cohorts the Psychology of Education component.

5.2.3 Analyses of the Data on Perceived Preparation and Competence

The data were analysed in the following manner. The first goal was to identify to what extent the students and beginning teachers feel that the course prepares them to teach. The ratings for Perceived Preparation are analysed for the three different cohorts: Student Teachers, First Year Teachers and More Experienced Teachers. The second goal was concerned with the extent to which the students and beginning teachers feel that they are competent in teaching. Again the data were analysed for the three cohorts. Differences between ratings of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence are considered for each cohort in turn. This enabled the researcher to attempt to establish to what extent the respondents felt that their Perceived Competence is related to their preparation or not. An examination of the correlations between the perceived effects of training and Perceived Competence identified to what extent the ratings in preparation to teach predict the ratings in competence in teaching for each cohort.

Differences between the ratings for preparation of Student Teachers as rated by the Teacher Educators and as perceived by the Student Teachers themselves were analysed. The correlations established between these two sets of ratings enabled the researcher to establish in which areas of the course there was agreement between these two groups in terms of how they rated the course. The same analytic procedures were adopted to examine the differences between ratings of the competence of First Year Teachers as observed by the Education Officers and the Perceived Competence of these teachers. Again the correlations established between the two sets of ratings for these two groups enabled the researcher to establish in which areas of teaching there was agreement between these two groups in terms of ratings of competence.

Sex differences were not taken into consideration for the purpose of this study. Since the main objective of this survey study was to map out the general perceptions of preparation and competence, it was not considered necessary to differentiate between the sex groups. The gender roles adopted by teachers (female, male, androgynous) may be considered in a future study as possible determinants of different levels of Perceived Preparation and Competence. Also because teachers in the primary sector are predominantly female this would have resulted in a self-reflected bias between the primary and secondary sub-groups.

5.2.4 Methodological Assumptions

1. There is no induction programme for beginning teachers in Malta and no formal feedback is offered to them by the Education Officers of the department of Education. Also the large majority of Student Teachers follow the university teacher education course as soon as they finish sixth-form. Therefore it is assumed that the student and beginning teachers are making decisions on their own with reference to their own experience and knowledge.

2. Since the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta is the only teacher education institution in Malta, the professional training backgrounds and experiences of the student and beginning teachers are assumed to be relatively uniform. This would be especially the case for graduates of the Faculty of the same year.

3. The centralised state schooling system in Malta offers teachers relatively homogeneous and uniform experiences in terms of the kind of schools that they are posted to in terms of environment, curriculum, syllabi, facilities and staff.

4. The respondents who were students or graduates of a university using English as the medium of instruction were assumed to be able to understand thoroughly the English and the meaning of the wording of the questionnaire.

5. The returned questionnaires were assumed to have been completed by each subject without anybody's assistance or influence.

5.2.5 Limitations of the Study

1. This first study explores self-rating of preparedness to teach and competence in teaching. It does not extend to assessing how well student and beginning teachers actually do perform the tasks for which they estimate their preparedness and competence. It is only in the second study that an attempt is made to establish a possible link with teaching performance. Feelings of preparedness to teach and competence in teaching do not translate directly to teaching, nor do they provide information concerning possibly related improvements in pupil achievement. A student teacher's feeling prepared to teach and competent in teaching, his or her belief in the feasibility of securing desirable behavioural changes through teaching and self-estimates of ability to effect such changes do not, in themselves, ensure that one is well prepared or competent to teach. However, there is evidence (e.g. Ashton & Webb, 1986; Housego, 1990a & 1990b) that within a reciprocal deterministic perspective the perceptions that beginning teachers have of their preparation is likely to affect their confidence in their competence to teach and their performance.

2. This is a cohort study and not a longitudinal one. However, since the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta is the only teacher education institution in Malta, the professional training backgrounds and experiences of the student and beginning teachers are assumed to be relatively uniform. Also, the centralised state schooling system in Malta offers teachers relatively homogeneous and uniform experiences in

terms of the kind of schools that they are posted to in terms of environment, curriculum, syllabi, facilities and staff. This has enabled the use of the three cohorts to provide developmental evidence in their career progression in terms of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence.

5.2.6 Responses to the Perceived Preparation Questionnaires

The final year Student Teachers and teachers were asked to rate their own preparation on each of the 26 items of the Perceived Preparation Questionnaire (see Appendix II, p. 267). The maximum score possible is 5, representing an optimal score for preparation.

Table 5.7 presents the mean scores of the 26 items on Perceived Preparation for the three groups: Student Teachers, First Year Teachers, and More Experienced Teachers with two to four years of teaching experience.

The Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance (*df* 2, 350) was employed to check for significant differences amongst the cohorts. Significant differences were established for all of the items except *Assessment of Pupils' Progress* .

The Tukey B Procedure was employed to identify pairs of significantly different groups. These are presented in Table 5.8. Overall there is a significant difference in terms of Perceived Preparation between the cohorts of Student Teachers and both groups of beginning teachers. Overall there is no significant difference between the two groups of beginning teachers. It is to be observed, also, that in terms of items the majority of significant differences in mean scores on Perceived Preparation occur between the cohorts of Student Teachers and First Year Teachers and between the cohorts of Student Teachers and More Experienced Teachers. On only a small number of items are there significant differences between the cohorts of First Year Teachers and More Experienced Teachers.

On most of the items the First Year Teachers rate a higher level of Preparation than the Student Teachers. This is, however, not the case for: *Questioning Techniques*,

Table 5.7 Mean Scores and Rankings of Items on Perceived Preparation for the three cohorts

		Student Teachers (N=72)			First Year Teachers (N=135)			Experienced Teachers (N=146)			One-way ANOVA (Kruskal-Wallis)		
Items	Preparation	Mean Score	S D	Rank	Mean Score	S D	Rank	Mean Score	S D	Rank	Chi-Square	P	
1	Language in Learning	3.12	1.01	5	2.8	1.01	22	2.55	1.23	24	15.1	0.0005	***
2	Questioning techniques	3.57	0.9	1	2.53	1.1	25	2.47	1.1	25	49.73	0.0001	***
3	Programme Planning	3.51	1.15	2	2.45	1.21	26	2.19	1.03	26	52.96	0.0001	***
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2.93	1.27	7	2.99	1.16	21	2.71	0.97	23	4.027	0.1335	ns
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	3.47	0.98	3	2.84	1.12	21	2.82	1.06	21	20.91	0.0001	***
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	2.38	0.91	15	3.7	1.17	17	4.05	1.05	8	89.48	0.0001	***
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	3.17	0.95	4	2.79	1	23	3.06	0.9	20	9.558	0.0084	**
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	2.26	0.96	19	3.73	1.19	16	3.76	1.05	13	78	0.0001	***
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	3.03	1.23	6	2.63	1.16	24	2.79	1.03	22	5.893	0.0425	*
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	1.58	0.85	25	4.32	0.86	5	4.14	0.98	4	155.775	0.0001	***
11	Administrative Duties	1.43	0.73	26	4.46	0.88	1	4.31	1.12	2	175.748	0.0001	***
12	Pastoral Duties	1.65	1.02	24	4.45	0.82	2	4.4	0.84	1	164.782	0.0001	***
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	2.68	1.05	10	3.3	1.06	18	3.21	1.21	19	15.5	0.0004	***
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	1.9	0.86	22	4.34	0.79	4	4.05	0.99	8	150.738	0.0001	***
15	Equal Opportunities	2.82	1.24	9	3.24	1.17	19	3.23	1.33	18	5.9592	0.0407	*
16	Liaison with Parents	1.86	0.92	23	4.2	0.97	7	4.16	0.98	3	140.961	0.0001	***
17	Maltese Reading	2.38	1.33	16	3.96	1.26	14	3.36	1.34	17	57.835	0.0001	***
18	English Reading	2.57	1.31	11	4.1	1.13	9	3.61	1.31	15	57.228	0.0001	***
19	Maltese Creative Writing	2.26	1.35	19	3.94	1.34	15	3.6	1.33	16	62.163	0.0001	***
20	English Creative Writing	2.44	1.28	12.5	4.15	1.17	8	3.83	1.23	12	72.193	0.0001	***
21	Mathematics	2.43	1.2	14	4	1.28	13	3.64	1.29	14	60.934	0.0001	***
22	Religious Education	2.06	1.19	21	4.28	1.1	6	3.94	1.16	10	111.325	0.0001	***
23	Social Studies	2.32	1.29	17	4.37	1.08	3	4.05	1.16	8	101.561	0.0001	***
24	Environmental Studies	2.88	1.27	8	4.06	1.3	11	4.06	1.19	6	51.065	0.0001	***
25	Art and Craft	2.44	1.25	12.5	4.08	1.3	10	4.07	1.14	5	79.05	0.0001	***
26	Physical Education	2.26	1.2	19	4.03	1.35	12	3.86	1.26	11	78.206	0.0001	***
	Overall Mean Score	65.4	14.67		95.74	16.06		91.92	14.77		7.884	0.0312	*
	* $p < 0.05$												
	** $p < 0.01$												
	*** $p < 0.001$												
	ns = Not Significant												

Table 5.8 Paired Comparisons for Perceived Preparation of the three cohorts

		ST : FYT	FYT : MET	ST : MET
Items				
1	Language in Learning	ns	ns	ST > MET*
2	Questioning techniques	ST>FYT*	ns	ST>MET*
3	Programme Planning	ST>FYT*	ns	ST>MET*
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	ns	ns	ns
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	ST>FYT*	ns	ST>MET*
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	ST<FYT*	FYT<MET*	ST<MET*
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	ST>FYT*	FYT<MET*	ns
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	ST>FYT*	ns	ns
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
11	Administrative Duties	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
12	Pastoral Duties	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
15	Equal Opportunities	ns	ns	ST<MET*
16	Liaison with Parents	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
17	Maltese Reading	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
18	English Reading	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
19	Maltese Creative Writing	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
20	English Creative Writing	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
21	Mathematics	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
22	Religious Education	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
23	Social Studies	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
24	Environmental Studies	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
25	Art and Craft	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
26	Physical Education	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
	Overall Perceived Preparation	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*
	* Denotes pairs of groups significantly different at the 0.05 level			
	ns = Not Significant			
	ST = Student Teachers (N = 72)			
	FYT = First Year Teachers (N = 135)			
	MET = More Experienced Teachers (N = 146)			

Programme Planning, *Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching*, *TeachingAverage Ability Pupils* and *Teaching More Able Pupils.* On two items: *Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils* and *Teaching Average Ability Pupils*, the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves significantly higher than the First Year Teachers. However, on *Teaching Pupils with Special Needs* and some of the subject - specific items: *Maltese Reading, English Reading, English Creative Writing, Mathematics, Religious Education,* and *Social Studies*, the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves significantly lower than the First Year Teachers. On most of the items the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves significantly higher than the Student Teachers. However, in the case of *Language in Learning*, *Questioning Techniques*, *Programme Planning* and *Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching,* the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves significantly lower than the Student Teachers.

Inspection of the list of items on Perceived Preparation (Table 5.7) suggests three distinct groupings: classroom-specific items, subject-specific items and more general professional items. The subject-specific items are those which deal with specific subject areas of the school curriculum. Classroom-specific items deal with actual teaching skills in the classroom situation, whereas the more general professional skills involve wider pastoral and interpersonal skills. These groupings were subjected to further and more technical validation through factor analysis described in Section 5.5, p. 145. In terms of rankings on Perceived Preparation the Student Teachers rank amongst the top ten, the specific classroom skills: *Questioning Techniques, Programme Planning, Effectiveness of own Teaching, Teaching Average Ability Pupils, Language in Learning, Teaching More Able Pupils, Assessment of Pupils' Progress, Equal Opportunities* and *Use of Audio-Visual Equipment.* These items, however, receive a low ranking by both the First Year Teachers and the Experienced Teachers. In fact for both groups these are the nine items in which they feel the least well prepared. The inverse is the case for the items, which involve more general professional skills: *Teaching Pupils with Special Needs, Liaison with Parents, Pastoral Duties, Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils* and *Administrative Duties* . These items receive a low ranking by the Student Teachers. However they receive top rankings by both the First Year Teachers and the Experienced Teachers. The remaining items, which include in the main the more subject-specific ones, receive a more consistently average ranking by the three groups.

An examination of the item groupings of Perceived Preparation (*df* 2, 350) (see Table 5.9 & Figure 5.1) revealed that there are no significant differences in Perceived Preparation across the three cohorts for the Classroom-specific Items. However, for both the More General Professional Items and the Subject-Specific Items, the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves higher on preparation ($p<0.05$) than the Student Teachers.

5.2.7 The Primary and Secondary sub-groups

The Perceived Preparation of both the Primary and Secondary sub-groups of the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers (see Table 5.10 & Figures 5.2 & 5.3) is significantly higher ($p<0.05$) than that of the Student Teachers for the More General Professional Items and the Subject-Specific Items, but not for the Classroom-Specific Items.

5.2.8 Summary

On the whole it seems that after a year at the chalk face the level of Perceived Preparation is higher for the First Year Teachers than that of the Student Teachers. This level of Perceived Preparation remains the same or is reduced for most of the items in the case of the More Experienced Teachers. In the case of *Questioning Techniques*, *Programme Planning* and the *Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching,* both the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves less well prepared than the Student Teachers. The classroom-specific skills tend to receive high rankings by the Student Teachers, but low rankings by both the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers. The subject-specific items tend to receive average rankings by the three cohorts, whereas the more general professional skills tend to be the items that receive low rankings by the Student Teachers and high rankings by the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers. Considerable stability in feelings of preparedness is shown between the First Year and More Experienced Teachers.

Table 5.9 Perceived Preparation of the three cohorts for the item groupings

	Student Teachers (N=72)		First Year Teachers (N=135)		More Experienced Teachers (N=146)		One-Way ANOVA (Kruskal-Wallis)		
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Chi-Square	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	32.89	6.06	33	7.62	32.7	6.09	0.119	0.9783	ns
More General Professional Items	7.5	2.68	21.75	2.95	21.05	3.17	172.68	0.0001	**
Subject-Specific Items	24	9.78	41	10.66	38	9.79	86.26	0.0001	**
Paired Comparisons for the Perceived Preparation of the three cohorts									
	ST:FYT		FYT:MET		ST:MET				
Classroom-Specific Items	ns		ns		ns				
More General Professional Items	ST<FYT*		ns		ST<MET*				
Subject-Specific Items	ST<FYT*		FYT>MET*		ST<MET*				
ns=Not Significant									
*p<0.05									
**p<0.001									

Figure 5.1 Perceived Preparation of the three cohorts for the item groupings

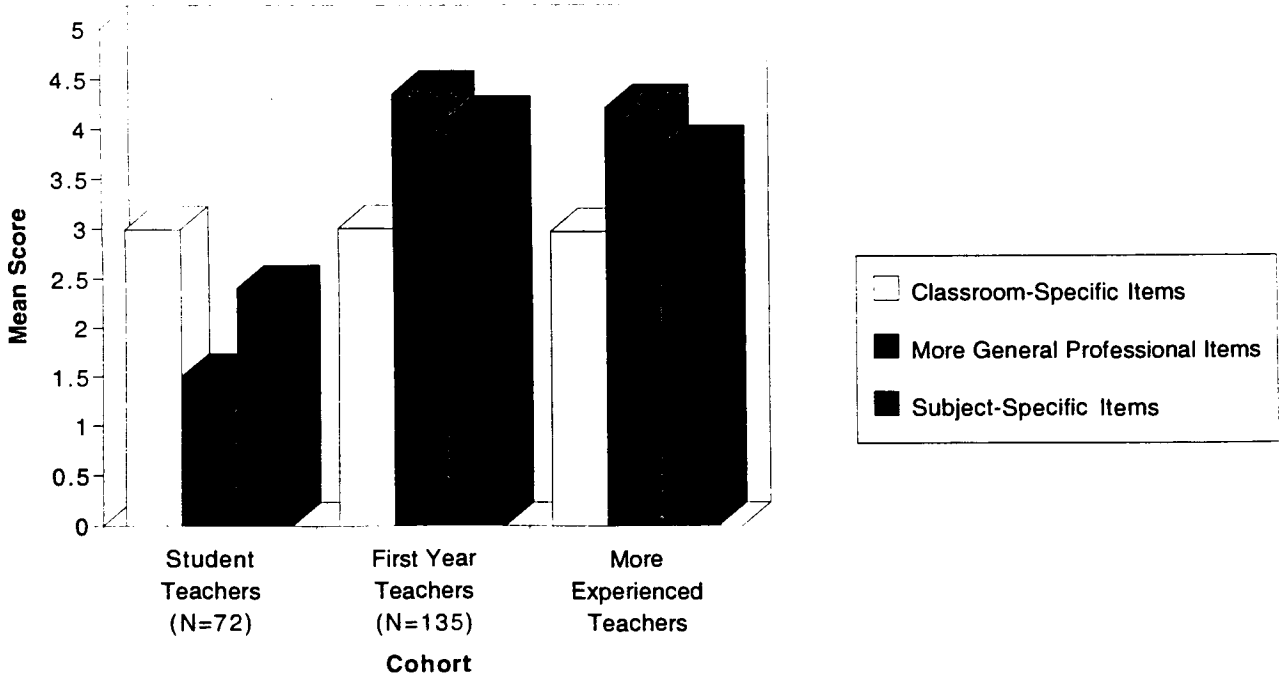


Table 5.10 Perceived Preparation of the Primary and Secondary sub-groups for the item groupings

Perceived Preparation of the Primary sub-groups									
	Student Teachers (N=24)		First Year Teachers (N=27)		More Experienced Teachers (N=50)		Differences across the three groups One-Way ANOVA (Kruskal-Wallis)		
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Chi-Square	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	32.5	6.06	30.11	9.28	31.84	6.05	0.124	0.789	ns
More General Professional Items	8.5	2.01	20.83	3.76	20.48	3.72	84.44	0.005	**
Subject-Specific Items	28	5.09	35.24	9.39	32.3	6.66	84.63	0.006	**
Paired Comparisons of the Primary sub-groups									
	ST:FYT	FYT:MET	ST:MET						
Classroom-Specific Items	ns	ns	ns						
More General Professional Items	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*						
Subject-Specific Items	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*						
Perceived Preparation of the Secondary sub-groups									
	Student Teachers (N=48)		First Year Teachers (N=108)		More Experienced Teachers (N=96)				
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Chi-Square	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	32.98	6.07	33.39	7.31	33.32	6.08	0.677	0.863	ns
More General Professional Items	8.43	2	21.91	2.8	21.37	2.83	75.67	0.007	**
Subject-Specific Items	23.77	3.76	41.8	10.8	41	9.86	45.86	0.002	**
Paired Comparisons of the Secondary sub-groups									
	ST:FYT	FYT:MET	ST:MET						
Classroom-Specific Items	ns	ns	ns						
More General Professional Items	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*						
Subject-Specific Items	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*						
ns=Not Significant									
*p<0.05									
*p<0.01									

Figure 5.2 Perceived Preparation of the Primary sub-groups for the item groupings

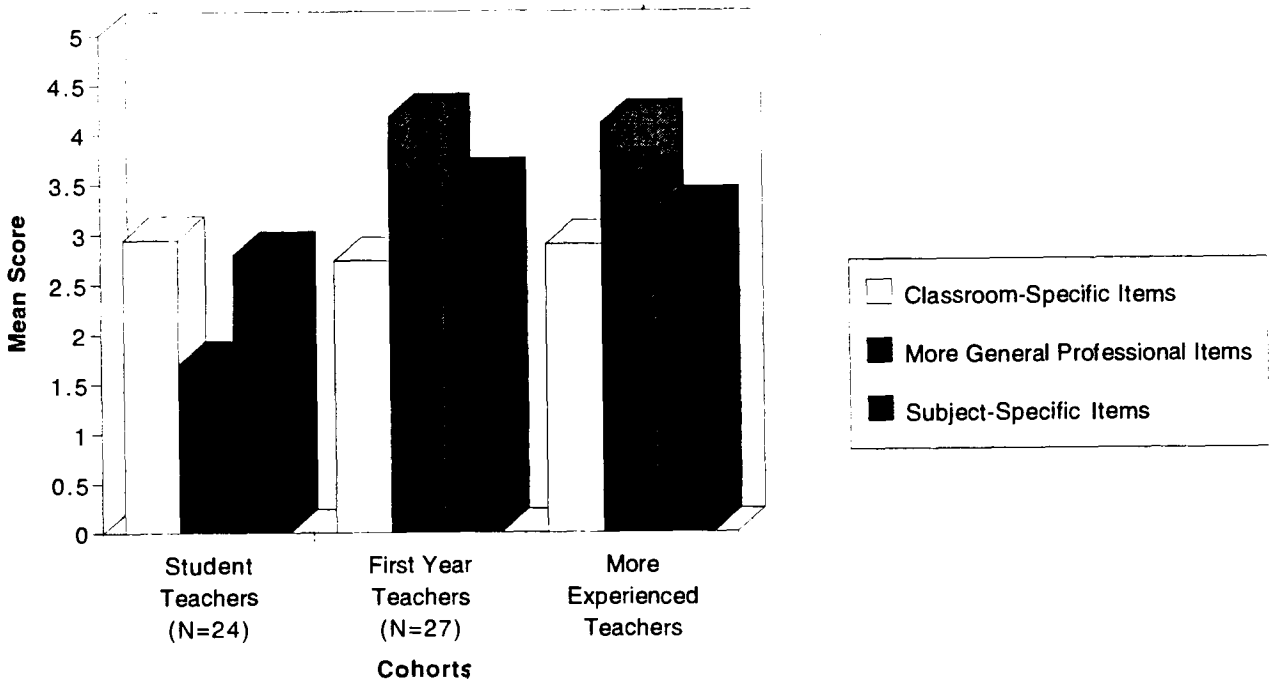
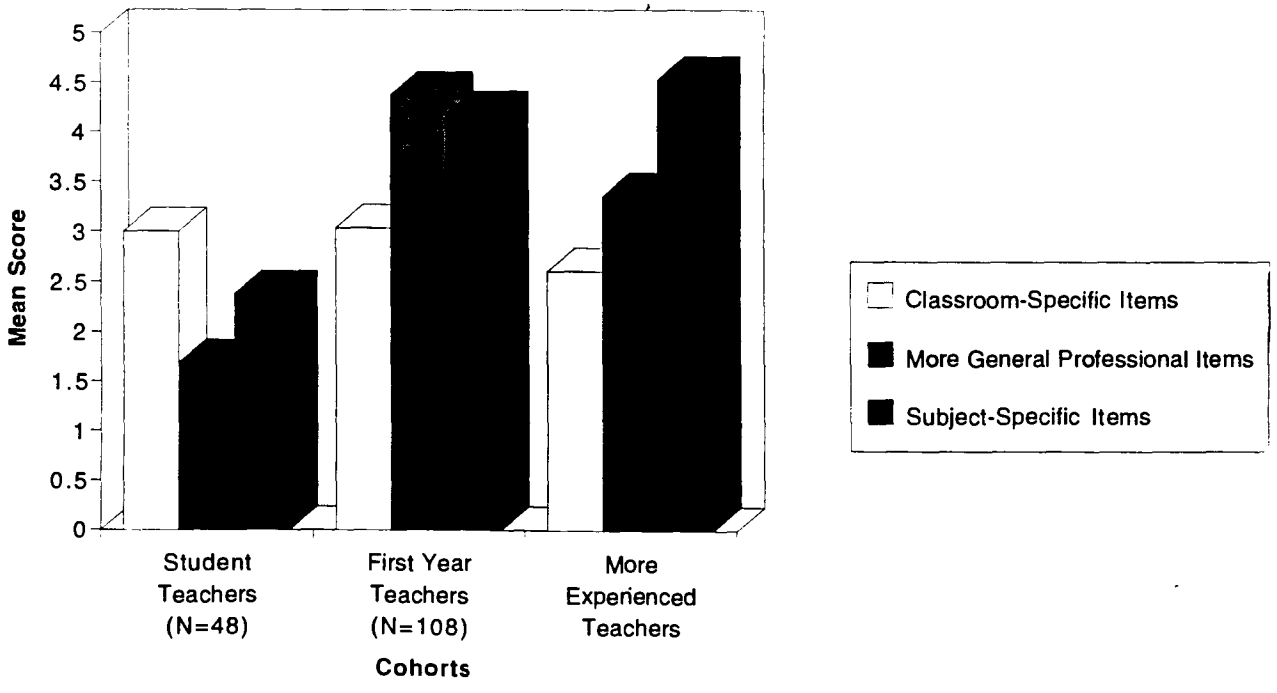


Figure 5.3 Perceived Preparation of the Secondary sub-groups for the item groupings



The Perceived Preparation of both the Primary and Secondary sub-groups of the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers is significantly higher than that of the Student Teachers for the More General Professional Items and the Subject-Specific Items, but not for the Classroom-Specific Items.

5.3 A Comparison of the views of Teacher Educators and Student Teachers about Preparation

In this section the views of the Teacher Educators about the effectiveness of the course are investigated. These are contrasted with the views of the final year student teachers themselves. In view of the fact that the Teacher Educators are the ones who design and deliver the course and observe students on their Teaching Practice they are well positioned to observe to what extent the various skills being investigated are effectively transmitted by the course and what are the constraints imposed on the student teacher by the circumstances of the particular school in which they are teaching. An attempt is made to identify the differences or similarities between Perceived Preparation for the Teacher Educators and the Student Teachers in order to identify differential patterns between the two groups.

The 28 Teacher Educators from the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta were asked to rate the extent to which the students were being prepared in the various areas. The Teacher Educator Questionnaire (TEQ) was devised for this purpose (see Appendix 2, p.). The items are identical to the Perceived Preparation and Competence Questionnaires. The 26 questionnaire items were scored on a five-point scale anchored on one end by 'very prepared' and on the other end by 'not prepared at all' Responses were assigned from 1 to 5 points, high scores indicating greater preparation.

Table 5.11 presents the mean scores for the items on Perceived Preparation for the Teacher Educators and the Student Teachers. The Mann-Whitney U Test for independent samples was employed to check for significant differences between the two groups of ratings. Overall there is not a significant difference between the mean score on preparation of the Teacher Educators and that of the Student Teachers. On over half the items there are no significant differences between the two sets of raters.

Table 5.11 Mean Scores and Rankings of Items on Perceived Preparation of the Teacher Educators and the Student Teachers

		Teacher Educators (N=28)			Student Teachers (N=72)			Mann-Whitney U			
	Perceived Preparation	Mean Score	SD	Rank	Mean Score	SD	Rank	Z	P		TE:ST
Items											
1	Language in Learning	2.36	0.95	15	3.12	1.01	5	-6.2551	0.0022	**	TE<ST
2	Questioning techniques	2.71	1.21	10	3.57	0.9	1	-5.8253	0.0006	***	TE<ST
3	Programme Planning	3.39	0.92	1	3.51	1.15	2	-9.2846	0.5251	ns	-
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2.64	1.1	11.5	2.93	1.27	7	-8.7243	0.2831	ns	-
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	2.64	1.22	11.5	3.47	0.98	3	-6.1421	0.0017	**	TE<ST
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	1.86	0.85	21	2.38	0.91	15.5	-7.0812	0.0158	*	TE<ST
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	3.29	0.98	2	3.17	0.95	4	-9.2845	0.5189	ns	-
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	1.71	0.9	23	2.26	0.96	19	-6.6025	0.0044	**	TE<ST
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	3.04	1.1	3	3.03	1.23	6	-9.9111	0.8932	ns	-
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	1.39	0.57	25	1.58	0.85	25	-9.1352	0.4049	ns	-
11	Administrative Duties	1.71	0.98	23	1.43	0.73	26	-8.6132	0.1784	ns	-
12	Pastoral Duties	1.71	0.85	23	1.65	1.02	24	-9.2525	0.4659	ns	-
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	2.79	0.74	8.5	2.68	1.05	10	-9.2654	0.5111	ns	-
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	1.36	0.68	26	1.9	0.86	22	-6.1753	0.0011	**	TE<ST
15	Equal Opportunities	2.32	1.19	16.5	2.82	1.24	9	-7.8552	0.0793	ns	-
16	Liaison with Parents	1.93	0.98	20	1.86	0.92	23	-9.7151	0.7644	ns	-
17	Maltese Reading	2.93	1.09	4	2.38	1.33	15.5	-7.5525	0.0455	*	TE>ST
18	English Reading	2.79	1.07	8.5	2.57	1.31	11	-9.2853	0.5289	ns	-
19	Maltese Creative Writing	2.43	1.03	14	2.26	1.35	19	-8.8012	0.3078	ns	-
20	English Creative Writing	2.32	0.86	16.5	2.44	1.28	12.5	-9.7932	0.8176	ns	-
21	Mathematics	2.82	0.77	7	2.43	1.2	14	-7.7223	0.0598	ns	-
22	Religious Education	2.89	0.74	5.5	2.06	1.19	21	-5.4121	0.0002	***	TE>ST
23	Social Studies	2.89	0.69	5.5	2.32	1.29	17	-6.8923	0.0113	*	TE>ST
24	Environmental Studies	2.5	0.79	13	2.88	1.27	8	-7.9664	0.0926	ns	-
25	Art and Craft	2.18	0.94	19	2.44	1.25	12.5	-8.9251	0.3577	ns	-
26	Physical Education	2.29	0.71	18	2.26	1.2	19	-9.6422	0.7245	ns	-
	Overall Mean Score	62.89	12.08		65.4	14.67		-15.6689	0.3256	ns	-
	* $p < 0.05$										
	** $p < 0.01$										
	*** $p < 0.001$										
	ns = Not Significant										

On these items there seems to be a good match between how the Student Teachers and the Teacher Educators rate the course. Significant differences resulted for *Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils*, *Maltese Reading*, *Social Studies* ($p < 0.05$), *Language in Learning, Assessment of the Effectiveness of Own Teaching*, *Teaching Less Able Pupils*, *Teaching Pupils with Special Needs* ($p < 0.01$), *Questioning Techniques* and *Religious Education.* ($p<0.001$). On the three subject-specific items: *Maltese Reading*, *Religious Education*, *Social Studies*, the Teacher Educators felt that the training course prepared the Student Teachers significantly more than the Student Teachers themselves thought it did. On the contrary, on the other items the Student Teachers considered the training course prepared them more than the Teacher Educators thought was the case.

The more general professional skills: *Pastoral Duties, Liaison with Parents, Administrative Duties, Teaching Children with Special Needs and Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils* receive the lowest rankings by both the Teacher Educators and the Student Teachers.

In terms of the item groupings (Table 5.12) it is only for the Classroom-specific items that there are significant differences ($p<0.01$) between the group of Teacher Educators and the group of Student Teachers.

5.3.1 Summary

Overall, there is no significant difference between the ratings on preparation of the Teacher Educators and those of the Student Teachers. However, on some of the items: *Language in Learning, Questioning Techniques, Assessment of the Effectiveness of own teaching, Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils* and *Teaching Pupils with Special Needs*, the Student Teachers have a higher opinion of the level of preparation than the Teacher Educators. The opposite is true for *Maltese Reading*, *Religious Education* and *Social Studies*. The more general professional skills receive the lowest rankings by both the Teacher Educators and the Student Teachers.

Table 5.12 The Perceived Preparation of the Teacher Educators and the Student Teachers for the item groupings

	Teacher Educators (N=28)		Student Teachers (N=72)		Mann-Whitney U		
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Z	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	28.75	6.1	32.89	6.06	-6.4654	0.005	*
More General Professional Items	8.1	2.15	7.5	2.68	-9.7011	0.769	ns
Subject-Specific Items	26.04	5.98	24	9.78	-9.1553	0.477	ns

ns=Not Significant

p<0.01

5.4 Perceived Competence of Student Teachers, First Year Teachers and More Experienced Teachers

Another concern of the present study was to establish to what extent the self-ratings of Perceived Competence of beginning teachers in their first teaching posts varied from those of final year Student Teachers and teachers with two to four years of teaching experience. The final year Student Teachers and beginning teachers were asked to rate their own competence on the Perceived Competence Questionnaire (see Appendix II, p. 267). The samples were the same as in the previous study.

Table 5.13 presents the mean scores of the 26 items on Perceived Competence for the three groups. The Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance (*df* 2, 50) was employed to check for significant differences between the cohorts. Significant differences were established for all items, except *Teaching Mixed Ability* and *Teaching Less Able Pupils.*

The Tukey B Procedure was employed to identify pairs of significantly different groups. These are presented in Table 5.14. There are significant differences between the three sets of paired cohorts. Also, significant differences in mean scores on Perceived Competence occur between the three cohorts of Student Teachers, First Year Teachers and More Experienced Teachers, for the majority of the items.

On the items: *Language in Learning, Questioning Techniques, Programme Planning, Assessment of Pupils' Progress, Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching, Teaching Average Ability Pupils, Teaching More Able Pupils, Use of Audio-Visual Equipment,* and *Equal Opportunities,* the First Year Teachers feel less competent than the Student Teachers. On most of these items the More Experienced Teachers feel less competent than both the Student Teachers and the First Year Teachers.

On the remaining items the First Year Teachers feel more competent than the Student Teachers. In turn the More Experienced Teachers feel overall less competent on these items than the First Year Teachers but still more competent than the Student Teachers. In terms of rankings on Perceived Competence (Table 5.13) the Student Teachers rank highly: *Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching, Questioning Techniques,*

Table 5.13 Mean Scores and Rankings of Items on Perceived Competence for the three cohorts

		Student Teachers (N=72)			First Year Teachers (N=135)			Experienced Teachers (N=146)			One-Way ANOVA (Kruskal - Wallis)		
Items	Competence	Mean Score	S D	Rank	Mean Score	S D	Rank	Mean Score	S D	Rank	Chi-Square	P	
1	Language in Learning	3.32	0.82	6.5	2.43	1.08	21	2.07	0.95	24	70.591	0.0001	**
2	Questioning techniques	3.63	1	2	2.39	1.08	24	2.19	0.85	21	78.302	0.0001	**
3	Programme Planning	3.6	0.93	3	2.05	0.98	26	1.84	0.95	26	107.374	0.0001	**
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	3.32	1.05	6.5	2.41	0.91	22.5	2.09	0.86	23	64.518	0.0001	**
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	3.76	0.88	1	2.64	0.99	20	2.25	0.79	20	96.929	0.0001	**
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	2.75	0.8	18	2.99	1.04	15	2.77	0.99	15	3.8132	0.1486	ns
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	3.43	0.78	5	2.41	1	22.5	2.1	0.79	22	87.494	0.0001	**
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	2.83	1.07	15.5	2.97	1.13	16	2.79	1.05	14	1.793	0.4079	ns
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	3.47	1.1	4	2.21	1.14	25	1.92	0.88	25	78.287	0.0001	**
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	2.26	0.98	26	3.52	1.13	12	3.21	1.16	11.5	51.449	0.0001	**
11	Administrative Duties	2.44	1.15	24.5	3.1	1.15	14	2.75	1.33	16	14.034	0.0009	**
12	Pastoral Duties	2.54	1.28	22.5	3.13	1.1	13	2.88	1.21	13	10.813	0.0045	*
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	3.19	1.21	10	2.79	1.1	19	2.65	1.01	17	11.936	0.0026	*
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	3.29	0.92	8.5	4.05	0.87	11	3.7	1.14	1	103.921	0.0001	**
15	Equal Opportunities	3.29	0.93	8.5	2.9	1.25	17	2.41	1.27	19	29.306	0.0001	**
16	Liaison with Parents	2.99	1	12.5	2.81	1.14	18	2.5	1.09	18	12.766	0.0017	*
17	Maltese Reading	2.68	1.23	20	4.21	1.3	6	3.21	1.56	11.5	62.13	0.0001	**
18	English Reading	2.83	1.26	15.5	4.33	1.15	2	3.25	1.56	10	65.888	0.0001	**
19	Maltese Creative Writing	2.65	1.28	21	4.16	1.38	10	3.35	1.52	8	55.388	0.0001	**
20	English Creative Writing	2.85	1.26	14	4.27	1.23	4	3.28	1.52	9	63.257	0.0001	**
21	Mathematics	2.99	1.31	12.5	4.18	1.34	9	3.45	1.54	6	41.689	0.0001	**
22	Religious Education	2.54	1.23	22.5	4.23	1.28	5	3.61	1.46	3.5	72.976	0.0001	**
23	Social Studies	2.76	1.24	17	4.2	1.26	7	3.44	1.5	7	55.171	0.0001	**
24	Environmental Studies	3.01	1.09	11	4.28	1.2	3	3.51	1.47	5	54.816	0.0001	**
25	Art and Craft	2.44	1.17	24.5	4.55	1.27	1	3.61	1.44	3.5	99.262	0.0001	**
26	Physical Education	2.71	1.17	19	4.19	1.4	8	3.68	1.33	2	61.557	0.0001	**
	Overall Mean Score	77.57	14.61		87.4	17.87		74.51	21.9		39.439	0.0001	**
	* $p < 0.01$												
	** $p < 0.001$												
	ns = Not Significant												

Table 5.14 Paired Comparisons for Perceived Competence of the three cohorts

		ST : FYT	FYT : MET	ST : MET
Items				
1	Language in Learning	ST>FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*
2	Questioning techniques	ST>FYT*	ns	ST>MET*
3	Programme Planning	ST>FYT*	ns	ST>MET*
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	ST>FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	ST>FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	ns	ns	ns
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	ST>FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	ns	ns	ns
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	ST>FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
11	Administrative Duties	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ns
12	Pastoral Duties	ST<FYT*	ns	ns
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	ST>FYT*	ns	ST>MET*
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
15	Equal Opportunities	ST>FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*
16	Liaison with Parents	ns	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*
17	Maltese Reading	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET
18	English Reading	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ns
19	Maltese Creative Writing	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
20	English Creative Writing	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
21	Mathematics	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
22	Religious Education	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
23	Social Studies	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
24	Environmental Studies	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
25	Art and Craft	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
26	Physical Education	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
	Overall Competence	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*
	* Denotes pairs of groups significantly different at the 0.05 level			
	ns = Not Significant			
	ST = Student Teachers (N = 72)			
	FYT = First Year Teachers (N = 135)			
	MET = More Experienced Teachers (N = 146)			

Programme Planning, Teaching More Able Pupils, Teaching Average Ability Pupils, Assessment of Pupils' Progress, Language in Learning, Equal Opportunities, and *Use of Audio-Visual Equipment*. These items, however, receive a low ranking by both the First Year and the More Experienced Teachers. In fact for both these groups these are among the ten items in which they feel the least competent. The teaching experience of both the First Year and More Experienced Teachers seems to have rendered them less confident about their competence on these items.

Items which are given a low ranking by the Student Teachers, are given a high ranking by both First Year Teachers and Experienced Teachers. These include: *Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils, Administrative Duties, Art and Craft, Pastoral Duties, Religious Education, Maltese Creative Writing, Maltese Reading, Physical Education, Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils, Social Studies, English Reading, Teaching Less Able Pupils, English Creative Writing, Mathematics* and *Environmental Studies.* On these items increased levels of Perceived Competence are registered with the first year of teaching experience. For most of them however, the level of competence decreases slightly after the first year of teaching.

An examination of the item groupings (*df* 2, 350) (see Table 5.15 & Figure 5.4) revealed that in the case of the Classroom-Specific items, the Perceived Competence of the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers is significantly lower ($p<0.05$) than that of the Student Teachers. However, the level of Perceived Competence for the Subject-specific items and the More General Professional Items of the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers is significantly higher than that of the Student Teachers.

5.4.1 The Primary and Secondary sub-groups

The Perceived Competence of the Primary sub-groups of the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers (see Table 5.16 & Figures 5.5 & 5.6) is significantly higher ($p<0.05$) than that of the Student Teachers for the More General Professional Items. However, the opposite is true for the Classroom-Specific Items and the Subject-Specific Items. In the case of the Secondary sub-groups, the Perceived Competence of

Table 5.15 Perceived Competence of the three cohorts for the item groupings

	Student Teachers (N=72)		First Year Teachers (N=135)		More Experienced Teachers (N=146)		One-Way ANOVA (Kruskall-Wallis)	
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Chi-Square	P
Classroom-Specific Items	36.59	6.42	28.19	7.44	25.08	6.06	101.52	0.0001 **
More General Professional Items	13.52	3.55	16.61	3.91	15.04	4.04	44.24	0.0001 **
Subject-Specific Items	27.46	9.49	42.6	11.5	34.39	12.7	67.62	0.0001 **

Table of Paired Comparisons for the Perceived Competence of the three cohorts

	ST:FYT	FYT:MET	ST:MET
Classroom-Specific Items	ST>FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*
More General Professional Items	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*
Subject-Specific Items	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*

ns=Not Significant
*p<0.05
**p<0.001

Figure 5.4 Perceived Competence of the three cohorts for the item groupings

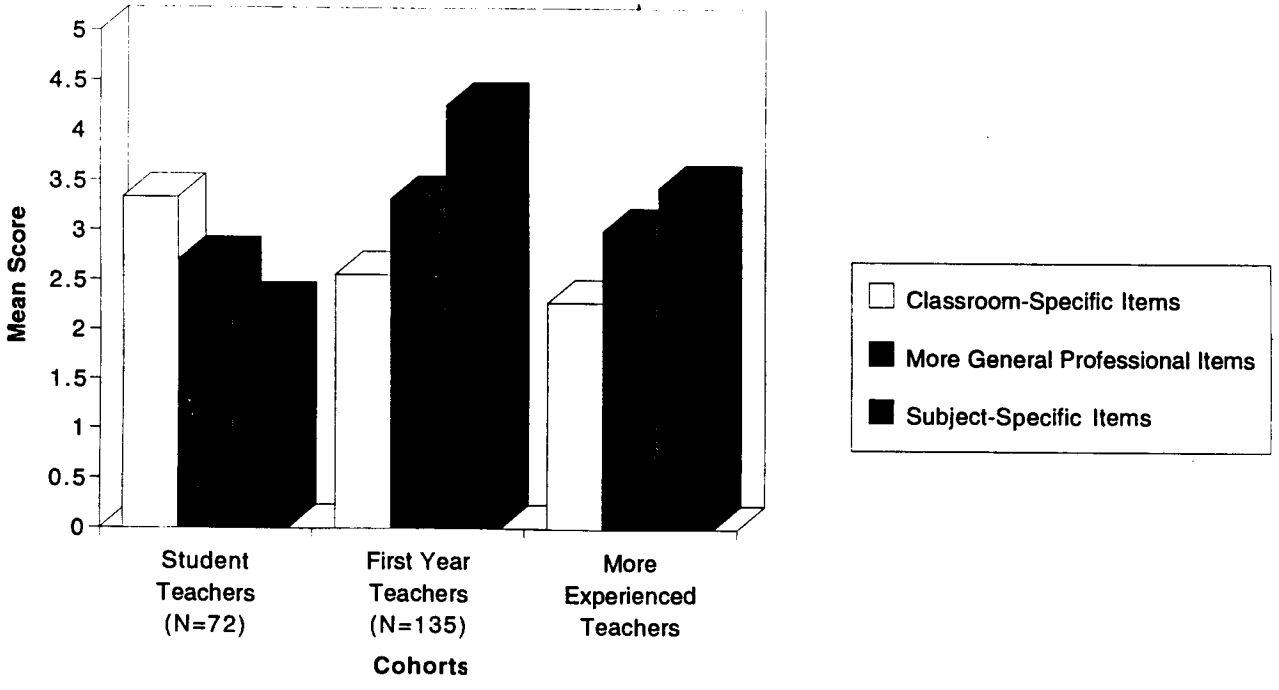


Table 5.16 Perceived Competence of the Primary and Secondary sub-groups for the item groupings

Perceived Competence of the Primary sub-groups									
	Student Teachers (N=24)		First Year Teachers (N=27)		More Experienced Teachers (N=50)		One-way ANOVA (Kruskal Wallis)		
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Chi-Square	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	37	10.1	24.65	8.54	24.86	6.04	75.89	0.006	**
More General Professional Items	12	2.8	15.12	3.2	14.28	3.9	51.07	0.002	**
Subject-Specific Items	30.75	9.4	23.35	6.48	24.84	8.31	63.98	0.009	**
Paired Comparisons of the Primary sub-groups									
	ST:FYT	FYT:MET	ST:MET						
Classroom-Specific Items	ST>FYT*	ns	ST>MET*						
More General Professional Items	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*						
Subject-Specific Items	ST>FYT*	ns	ST>MET*						
Perceived Competence of the Secondary sub-groups									
	Student Teachers (N=48)		First Year Teachers (N=108)		More Experienced Teachers (N=96)				
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Chi-Square	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	36.57	9.6	28.7	7.17	25.2	6.1	55.86	0.008	**
More General Professional Items	12.47	2.9	16.82	3.96	15.45	4.08	64.32	0.003	**
Subject-Specific Items	27.32	8.6	45.35	9.17	38.37	11.37	88.68	0.0001	***
Paired Comparisons of the Secondary sub-groups									
	ST:FYT	FYT:MET	ST:MET						
Classroom-Specific Items	ST>FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST>MET*						
More General Professional Items	ST<FYT*	ns	ST<MET*						
Subject-Specific Items	ST<FYT*	FYT>MET*	ST<MET*						
ns=Not Significant									
*p<0.05									
**p<0.01									
***p<0.001									

Figure 5.5 Perceived Competence of the Primary sub-groups for the item groupings

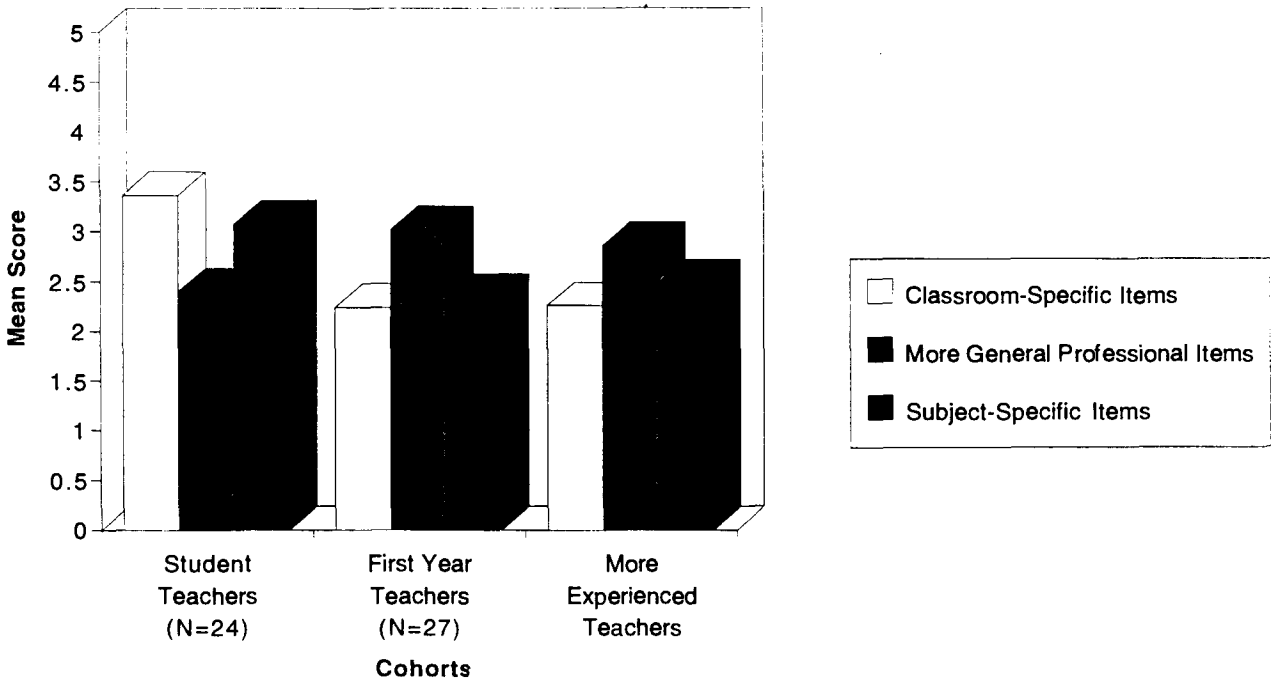
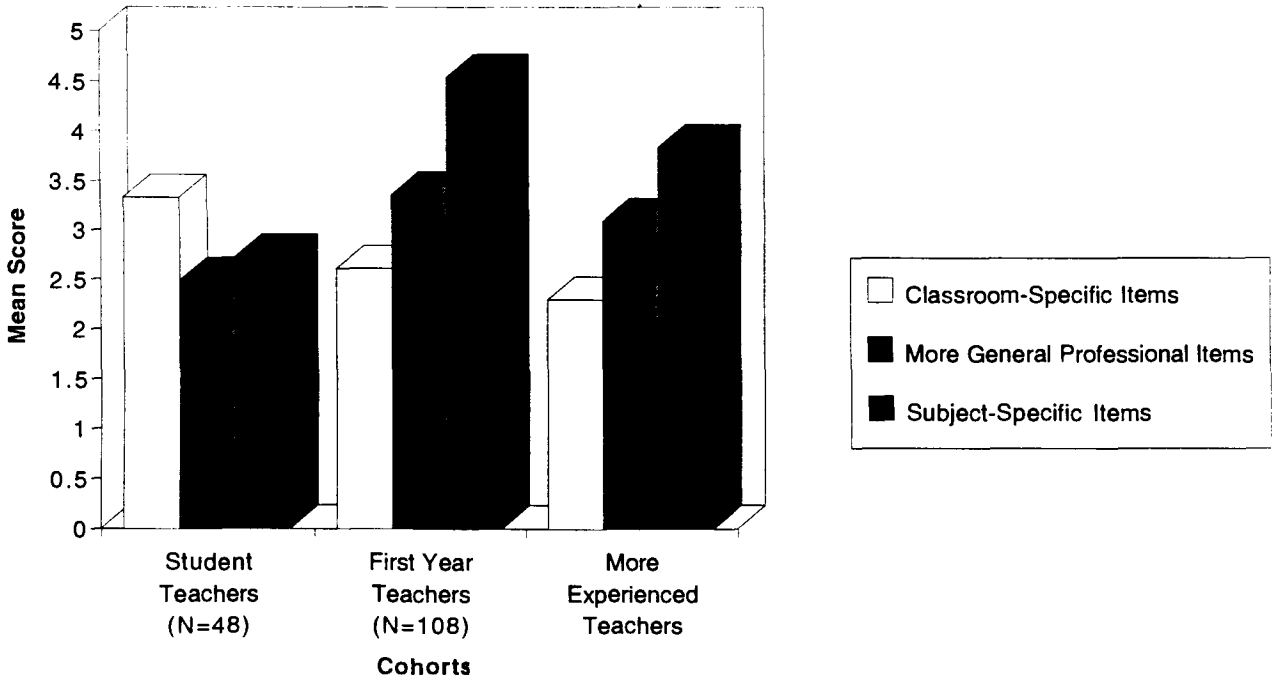


Figure 5.6 Perceived Competence of the Secondary sub-groups for the item groupings



the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers is significantly higher ($p<0.05$) than that of the Student Teachers for both the More General Professional Items and the Subject-Specific Items. The opposite is true for the Classroom-Specific Items. Also for the Secondary sub-groups, the First Year Teachers rate themselves significantly higher ($p<0.05$) than the More Experienced Teachers for the Classroom-Specific items and the Subject-Specific Items.

5.4.2 Summary

The First Year Teachers have higher ratings for competence than Student Teachers on most of the More General Professional Items and the Subject-Specific Items and on almost all the items when compared to the More Experienced Teachers. For the Subject-Specific items, the More Experienced Teachers have higher ratings than the Student Teachers. In the case of most of the other items the More Experienced Teachers tend to have ratings even lower than those of the Student Teachers.

In terms of rankings the classroom-specific items tend to receive higher rankings by the Student Teachers and low rankings by the beginning teachers. The opposite is the case for the more general professional items and the subject-specific items.

The Perceived Competence of the Primary sub-groups of the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers is significantly higher than that of the Student Teachers for the More General Professional Items. However, the opposite is true for the Classroom-Specific Items and the Subject-Specific Items. In the case of the Secondary sub-groups, the Perceived Competence of the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers is significantly higher than that of the Student Teachers for both the More General Professional Items and the Subject-Specific Items. The opposite is true for the Classroom-Specific Items. Also for the Secondary sub-groups, the First Year Teachers rate themselves significantly higher than the More Experienced Teachers for the Classroom-Specific items and the Subject-Specific Items.

5.5 Constructs of Perceived Competence

A factor analysis using SPSS was carried out to analyse the underlying factor structure of the overall responses (N = 353) to the 26 items of the Perceived Competence Questionnaire in order to establish whether there are any different response patterns to the questions on competence. Squared multiple correlations in the main diagonal of the correlation matrix were used. An iteration procedure for improving estimates of communality was adopted.

Two factors, which accounted for 54.9% of the variance, were extracted from the factor analysis with varimax rotation (see Appendix V, p. 385). As suggested by Rummel (1970), both oblique and orthogonal rotations were used to compare item loadings and degree of correlations between factors. With delta value set at zero, the oblique rotation revealed that the two factors were only moderately correlated (R=0.26), suggesting that the two factors represent related, but relatively independent, constructs. Because of this moderate correlation as well as the fact that the same items yielded significant item loadings for both solutions, the orthogonal factor structure was used as the final solution.

Two substantial factors emerged from the Factor Analysis, with Factor 1 accounting for 37.3% of the total variance and Factor 2 accounting for 17.6% of the total variance. Each of the remaining factors accounted for less than 7% of the total variance. Table 5.17 displays the items that loaded on Factor 1 and on Factor 2.

Factor 1 appears to represent a teacher's sense of competence in teaching the various subject areas and to a lesser degree in more general classroom skills. In fact the subject specific items rank as the ten items with the highest loadings, rating above 0.6 in the factor. The other items which load at 0.4 and higher represent more general classroom skills which normally tend to present the beginning teacher with average difficulty. The remaining items which load at less than 0.4 on the factor: *Equal Opportunities*, *Questioning Techniques*, *Administrative Duties*, *Pastoral Duties*, *Teaching less Able Pupils* and *Use of Audio-Visual Equipment* seem to represent items with which a substantial number of Maltese beginning teachers encounter difficulties. They feel less competent about that teaching less able pupils. The dearth of audio-visual equipment in

Table 5.17 Item Loadings for Factors 1 and 2 of Perceived Competence

Items		Factor 1			Factor 2
1	Maltese Creative Writing	0.88		Teaching Average Ability Pupils	0.57
2	Maltese Reading	0.88		Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	0.56
3	English Reading	0.88		Effectiveness of own Teaching	0.53
4	English Creative Writing	0.87		Liaison with Parents	0.53
5	Social Studies	0.85		Administrative Duties	0.49
6	Mathematics	0.85		Assessment of Pupils' Progress	0.49
7	Religious Education	0.84		Programme Planning	0.48
8	Environmental Studies	0.83		Teaching More Able Pupils	0.44
9	Physical Education	0.74		Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	0.44
10	Art and Craft	0.61		Equal Opportunities	0.43
11	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	0.54		Questioning Techniques	0.42
12	Liaison with Parents	0.5		Pastoral Duties	0.41
13	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	0.49		Language in Learning	0.37
14	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	0.49		Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	0.35
15	Language in Learning	0.48		Teaching Less Able Pupils	0.34
16	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	0.46		Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	0.32
17	Programme Planning	0.44		English Creative Writing	-0.4
18	Teaching More Able Pupils	0.42		Maltese Reading	-0.4
19	Effectiveness of own Teaching	0.41		Maltese Creative Writing	-0.4
20	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	0.41		Religious Education	-0.39
21	Equal Opportunities	0.39		Mathematics	-0.38
22	Questioning Techniques	0.37		English Reading	-0.37
23	Administrative Duties	0.36		Social Studies	-0.36
24	Pastoral Duties	0.33		Physical Education	-0.34
25	Teaching Less Able Pupils	0.32		Environmental Studies	-0.3
26	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	0.24		Art and Craft	-0.2

the schools does not allow them the opportunity to exercise their competence in using this equipment. Also the centralised schooling system and the lack of availability of support staff (clerks, technicians, etc.) in the schools means that the Maltese teacher is presented with a multitude of administrative duties. Also the very limited supply of counsellors in schools and members of staff who have special responsibilities for pastoral care imposes upon the regular Maltese class teacher a plethora of pastoral responsibilities for which the beginning teacher feels unprepared. This is frequently particularly overwhelming for beginning teachers who have no training or experience in these aspects.

Factor 2 appears to represent a teacher's sense of competence in more general classroom skills and lack of competence in the subject specific areas. The subject specific areas load negatively on this factor.

5.5.1 Summary

Two main factors were extracted from the Factor Analysis. Factor 1 appears to represent a teacher's sense of competence in teaching the various subject areas and to a lesser degree in more general classroom skills. Factor 2 appears to represent a teacher's sense of competence in more general classroom skills and lack of competence in the subject specific areas.

The statistical procedure used in this section to generate factors from the responses to the Perceived Competence Questionnaire of the First Year Teachers has borne out the groupings of: Classroom-Specific items, Subject-Specific items and More General Professional items as identified in the preceding section on Perceived Competence.

5.6 The Relationship between the Education Officers' Rating on Competence and the First Year Teachers' Self-Rating on Competence

In this section an attempt is made to identify the differences between the competence of First Year Teachers as observed by the Education Officers and the Perceived Competence of these same First Year Teachers. This presented a unique opportunity to see to what extent self-ratings of First Year Teachers matched the 'outsider ratings' of the Education Officers.

The 23 Education Officers of the Department of Education monitor the progress of First Year Teachers. Each education officer is responsible, either for a number of state primary schools or for a subject area specialisation taught in the Secondary schools. They were provided with a rating schedule: the Education Officer Rating Schedule (EORS) [see Appendix II, p. 294] that contained the same items as the sections dealing with self-estimates of preparation and competence in teaching of the questionnaires designed for intending and beginning teachers. The 26 rating items were again scored on a five-point scale anchored on one end by 'very competent' and on the other end by 'incompetent'. Responses were assigned from 1 to 5 points, high scores indicating greater competence. Their ratings were completed after having observed the teaching and professional behaviour of the first year beginning teachers throughout the 1991-92 scholastic year. Each beginning teacher received two visits per term from the respective education officer. In most cases the visits were more frequent.

The ratings of Education Officers were obtained at the end of the school year, at approximately the same time that the self-ratings of the 87-91 cohort of beginning teachers were obtained.

Table 5.18 presents the mean scores for the ranked items for the competence of First Year Teachers as observed by the Education Officers and the mean scores of the Perceived Competence of these same first year teachers.

The Mann-Whitney U Test for independent samples was employed to check for significant differences between the two groups of ratings. There were no overall

Table 5.18 Mean Scores and Rankings of Items of the Competence of First Year Teachers as observed by the Education Officers and as Perceived by the First Year Teachers

		Education Officers (N=23)			First Year Teachers (N=135)			Mann-Whitney U			
		Mean Score	SD	Rank	Mean Score	SD	Rank	Z	P		EO:FYT
Items											
1	Language in Learning	1.9	1.26	15	2.43	1.08	11	-6.7151	0.0001	***	EO<FYT
2	Questioning techniques	2.1	0.49	14	2.39	1.08	14	-7.8645	0.0673	ns	-
3	Programme Planning	2.42	0.71	11	2.05	0.98	16	-7.2415	0.1652	ns	-
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2.21	0.9	13	2.41	0.91	12.5	-8.1786	0.1838	ns	-
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	2.37	1.14	12	2.64	0.99	10	-8.1975	0.1961	ns	-
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	2.61	0.98	10	2.99	1.04	5	-7.6594	0.1321	ns	-
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	3.04	0.4	7	2.41	1	12.5	-7.0332	0.0001	***	EO>FYT
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	3.1	1	5	2.97	1.13	6	-8.3815	0.3303	ns	-
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	3.41	1.08	1	2.21	1.14	15	-4.1513	0.0001	***	EO>FYT
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	3.27	1.38	4	3.52	1.13	2	-8.0932	0.1513	ns	-
11	Administrative Duties	3.4	1.43	2	3.1	1.15	4	-7.6564	0.0051	**	EO>FYT
12	Pastoral Duties	3.08	1.25	6	3.13	1.1	3	-8.9085	0.9112	ns	-
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	1.83	1.25	16	2.79	1.1	9	-4.3405	0.0001	***	EO<FYT
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	3.01	1.03	8	4.05	0.87	1	-4.4345	0.0001	***	EO<FYT
15	Equal Opportunities	3.33	0.61	3	2.9	1.25	7	-6.8632	0.0001	***	EO>FYT
16	Liaison with Parents	2.83	1.48	9	2.81	1.14	8	-8.6855	0.6171	ns	-
	Overall Mean Scores	43.91	7.87		44.8	17.87		-2.9821	0.4764	ns	-
	* $p < 0.05$										
	** $p < 0.01$										
	*** $p < 0.001$										
	ns = Not Significant										

significant differences between the Education Officers' ratings and the First Year Teachers' self-ratings. In terms of items no significant differences were found on nine items. On three items: *Language in Learning, Use of Audio-Visual Equipment,* and *Teaching Pupils with Special Needs,* the First Year Teachers rated themselves more highly than they were rated by the Education Officers. On four items: *Teaching Average Ability Pupils, Teaching More Able Pupils, Administrative Duties and Equal Opportunities,* the Education Officers rated the First Year Teachers as more competent than they rated themselves. It is significant to note that item that the Education Officers rate most highly: *Teaching More Able Pupils* is the one that the First Year Teachers rate themselves on almost worst. There was no opportunity for the Education Officers to observe the competence of the First Year Teachers on the subject-specific items as the majority of them (80%) were teaching at secondary level. Both groups rank more highly competence in the more general professional skills.

It was important to establish not simply the overall ratings given by the two groups, but the agreement between them when rating the same person's skills. The Education Officers' ratings of the First Year Teachers were compared on each item with that same teacher's rating of his/her competence.

The relationship between the Education Officers' Rating on Competence and the First Year Teachers' self-rating on competence was determined by means of the Kendall's tau rank correlation coefficient (Kendall's tau-b). The results obtained are shown in Table 5.19.

In terms of the relationship between the Education Officers' rating on competence and the First Year Teachers' self-rating on competence there was a fairly strong correlation (0.66). In terms of items a fairly strong relationship (>0.5) was established for *Questioning Techniques, Equal Opportunities* and *Teaching More Able Pupils.* However a poor relationship (< 0.35) was established for items: *Teaching Average Ability Pupils, Pastoral Duties , Use of Audio-Visual Equipment, Administrative Duties and Teaching of Children with Special Needs.*

In terms of the item groupings (see Table 5.20) significant differences (p 0.05) were found for the More General Professional items. A fairly strong correlation (p<0.72)

Table 5.19 The relationship between the Education Officers' Rating on Competence and the First Year Teachers' self-rating on Competence

Items	r†	t-value
1) Questioning Techniques	0.57	7.29**
2) Equal Opportunities	0.54	8.31**
3) Teaching More Able Pupils	0.52	6.92**
4) Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching	0.46	4.05**
5) Language in Learning	0.45	4.85**
6) Plan a Programme	0.43	5.07**
7) Assessment of Pupils' Progress	0.41	4.16**
8) Teaching Less Able Pupils	0.40	4.59**
9) Liaison with Parents	0.38	4.07**
10) Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	0.36	4.24**
11) Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	0.36	4.65**
12)Teaching Average Ability Pupils	0.33	3.92**
13) Pastoral Duties	0.32	3.54**
14) Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	0.31	3.47**
15) Administrative Duties	0.28	3.47**
16) Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	0.24	2.07*
Overall Relationship	0.66	8.98**

† N for Education Officers = 23
N for Student Teachers = 72
*p < 0.01
**p < 0.001

Table 5.20 Differences and Correlations between Ratings of the Competence of the First Year Teachers as observed by the Education Officers and as Perceived by the First Year Teachers

Differences between Ratings of the Competence of First Year Teachers as observed by the Education Officers and as Perceived by the First Year Teachers themselves							
	Education Officers (N=23)		First Year Teachers (N=135)		Mann-Whitney U		
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Z	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	28.32	4.47	28.19	7.44	-8.5232	0.4729	ns
More General Professional Items	15.59	2.94	16.61	3.91	-7.6205	0.0318	*

Correlations between ratings of the Competence of First Year Teachers as observed by the Education Officers and as Perceived by the First Year Teachers themselves		
	r	t-value
Classroom-Specific Items	0.72	17.61**
More General Professional Items	0.56	15.25**

ns=Not Significant
*p<0.05
p<0.001

was obtained for the Classroom-specific items, whereas a moderate relationship was obtained for the More General Professional items (0.56)

5.6.1 Summary

Overall there was not a significant difference between Education Officers' rating on competence and the First Year Teachers' self-rating on competence. On more than half of the items the ratings of the competence of the First Year Teachers as rated by the Education Officers are not significantly different from the self-ratings of the First Year Teachers themselves. On some of the items the Education Officers rated the First Year Teachers higher than they rated themselves. The opposite is true for the remaining items. It seems also that the relationship between the items as rated by the Education Officers and the self-ratings of First Year Teachers is stronger for those items on which there is more agreement on what constitutes good practice. The items for which a poor relationship is registered are those items on which there is less agreement in this context as to what constitutes good practice. Also there may have been insufficient opportunity for the Education Officers to observe the practice of these particular items. There was no opportunity for the Education Officers to observe the teaching of any of the subject-specific items.

CHAPTER SIX

A COMPARISON OF RATINGS FOR PERCEIVED PREPARATION AND COMPETENCE

6.1 Introduction

For each group the differences and relationship between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence have been investigated in order to identify in which areas of the course the student or beginning teachers felt themselves to be more prepared than competent and vice-versa. The extent to which the ratings in preparation to teach predict the ratings in competence in teaching is examined. This investigation is carried out for each cohort and for the Primary and Secondary sub-groups within each cohort.

The inclusion of the various homogeneous cohorts in this study has made possible the examination of the changing patterns of Perceived Preparation and competence with the shift from training to full-time teaching and with increased teaching experience. Comparisons across cohorts enable us to determine what fluctuations in Perceived Preparation and competence occur in the various teacher education curricular areas with increased teaching experience.

6.2 The Student Teachers

Table 6.1 represents the mean scores for the items on Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for the Student Teachers. The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks Test was employed to check for significant differences between the two sets of

Table 6.1 Differences between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for the Student Teachers (N=72)

		Perceived Preparation				Perceived Competence						
Items		Mean Score	S D	Rank		Mean Score	S D	Rank	Wicoxon Z	P		PP:PC
1	Language in Learning	3.12	1.01	5		3.32	0.82	6.5	-1.8617	0.0626	ns	-
2	Questioning techniques	3.57	0.9	1		3.63	1	2	-0.6487	0.5165	ns	-
3	Programme Planning	3.51	1.15	2		3.6	0.93	3	-0.8266	0.4084	ns	-
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2.93	1.27	7		3.32	1.05	6.5	-2.9394	0.0033	**	PP<PC
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	3.47	0.98	3		3.76	0.88	1	-2.8008	0.0051	**	PP<PC
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	2.38	0.91	15.5		2.75	0.8	17	-3.0459	0.0023	**	PP<PC
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	3.17	0.95	4		3.43	0.78	5	-2.3305	0.0198	*	PP<PC
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	2.26	0.96	19		2.83	1.07	14.5	-4.2336	0.0001	***	PP<PC
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	3.03	1.23	6		3.47	1.1	4	-2.8101	0.0051	**	PP<PC
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	1.58	0.85	25		2.26	0.98	25	-4.2664	0.0001	***	PP<PC
11	Administrative Duties	1.43	0.73	26		2.44	1.15	23.5	-5.3898	0.0001	***	PP<PC
12	Pastoral Duties	1.65	1.02	24		2.54	1.28	21.5	-4.6456	0.0001	***	PP<PC
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	2.68	1.05	10		3.19	1.21	9	-3.5517	0.0004	***	PP<PC
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	1.9	0.86	22		2.21	0.92	26	-2.4151	0.0157	*	PP<PC
15	Equal Opportunities	2.82	1.24	9		3.29	0.93	8	-3.2821	0.001	***	PP<PC
16	Liaison with Parents	1.86	0.92	23		2.99	1	11.5	-6.0242	0.0001	***	PP<PC
17	Maltese Reading	2.38	1.33	15.5		2.68	1.23	19	-2.6646	0.0077	**	PP<PC
18	English Reading	2.57	1.31	11		2.83	1.26	14.5	-2.1083	0.0351	*	PP<PC
19	Maltese Creative Writing	2.26	1.35	19		2.65	1.28	20	-3.0432	0.0023	**	PP<PC
20	English Creative Writing	2.44	1.28	12.5		2.85	1.26	13	-2.9418	0.0033	**	PP<PC
21	Mathematics	2.43	1.2	14		2.99	1.31	11.5	-4.0754	0.0001	***	PP<PC
22	Religious Education	2.06	1.19	21		2.54	1.23	21.5	-3.3114	0.0009	***	PP<PC
23	Social Studies	2.32	1.29	17		2.76	1.24	16	-3.4246	0.0006	***	PP<PC
24	Environmental Studies	2.88	1.27	8		3.01	1.09	10	-0.7928	0.4279	ns	-
25	Art and Craft	2.44	1.25	12.5		2.44	1.17	23.5	-0.0268	0.9786	ns	-
26	Physical Education	2.26	1.2	19		2.71	1.17	18	-2.9611	0.0031	**	PP<PC
	Overall Mean Score	65.4	14.67			76.49	14.6		-3.7421	0.0001	***	PP<PC
	* $p < 0.05$											
	** $p < 0.01$											
	*** $p < 0.001$											
	ns = Not Significant											

rankings. Overall there was a significant difference between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for the Student Teachers. Significant differences were established for all the items, except *Language in Learning, Questioning Techniques, Programme Planning, Environmental Studies* and *Art and Craft.*. On these items the ratings on Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence are almost identical. The Student Teachers consider their competence on these items to be more directly linked to their preparation. On all the other items the Student Teachers felt significantly more competent than prepared.

The items of Perceived Preparation which rank as the top ten items on Perceived Preparation feature within the first ten rankings for Perceived Competence. These are: *Questioning Techniques, Programme Planning, Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching, Teaching Average Ability Pupils, Language in Learning, Teaching More Able Pupils, Assessment of Pupils' Progress, Environmental Studies, Equal Opportunities* and *Use of Audio-visual Equipment.* Also, the items of Perceived Preparation which rank the lowest on Perceived Preparation feature within the lowest ten rankings for Perceived Competence. These are: *Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils, Maltese Reading, Social Studies, Teaching Less Able Pupils, Maltese Creative Writing, Physical Education, Religious Education, Teaching Pupils with Special Needs, Pastoral Duties, Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils and Administrative Duties.*

Kendall's tau rank correlation coefficient (Kendall's tau-b) was employed to identify the relationship between the self-estimates of preparation and those of competence. This technique deals better with tied ranks-for example, when two or more people are at the same rank for both variables (Bryman and Cramer, 1990, p.173; Siegel, 1956). The results for the Student Teachers (N=72) are shown in Table 6.2.

A fairly strong overall correlation (0.62) was found between the Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence of the Student Teachers. A fairly strong relationship ($\geq$ 0.5) between self-estimates of preparation and competence was found, too, for most of the subject-specific items and some of the classroom specific items like: *Questioning Techniques, Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching, Assessment of Pupils' Progress, Language in Learning, Planning a Programme* and *Teaching Less Able Pupils.* A low relationship between self-estimates of preparation to teach and competence in teaching (< 0.35) was registered for the following items: *Liaison with*

Table 6.2 The Relationship between the self - ratings of Preparation and Competence of Student Teachers

Items	r†	t-value
1) Maltese Reading	0.70	10.88**
2) Questioning Techniques	0.69	8.52**
3) English Reading	0.67	9.91**
4) Maltese Creative Writing	0.66	11.19**
5) Art and Craft	0.64	9.22**
6) Environmental Studies	0.62	6.43**
7) Effectiveness of own teaching	0.61	10.17**
8) Social Studies	0.61	7.34**
9) Mathematics	0.61	9.77**
10) English Creative Writing	0.59	8.3**
11) Assessment of pupils' progress	0.56	10.02**
12) Language in learning	0.55	6.60**
13) Plan a programme	0.54	7.95**
14) Teaching Less Able Pupils	0.53	8.65**
15) Physical Education	0.50	5.76**
16) Audio-visual equipment	0.48	6.07**
17) Religious Education	0.48	5.88**
18) Teaching Average Ability Pupils	0.48	6.63**
19) Equal opportunities	0.45	6.01**
20) Teaching More Able Pupils	0.39	3.89**
21) Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	0.37	4.56**
22) Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	0.36	3.75**
23) Liaison with Parents	0.33	3.2**
24) Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	0.28	2.88**
25) Administrative duties	0.23	2.6**
26) Pastoral duties	0.22	2.06*
Overall Relationship	0.62	7.32**

† N = 72
*p< 0.01
** p < 0.001

Parents, Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils, Administrative Duties and *Pastoral Duties.*

The subject-specific and classroom-specific items are the ones for which a fairly strong correlation (≥ 0.5) is registered. The Student Teachers tend to rate themselves similarly on these items for the perceived levels of both preparation and competence. The relationship between levels of Perceived Preparation and competence for these items seem to be quite clear for the Student Teachers. With the items which involve broader professional skills: *Liaison with Parents, Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils, Administrative Duties* and *Pastoral Duties*; the levels of correlation are lower (< 0.35). The Student Teachers seem to feel that their preparation on these items is not a good predictor of their competence in these items.

An investigation of the cross tabulations between the Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Ratings for each item was conducted (See Appendix IV, p. 300). An examination of the ties indicated that on the items: *Programme Planning, Questioning Techniques, Effectiveness of own Teaching, Teaching Average Ability Pupils, Teaching More Able Pupils, Equal Opportunities* and *Assessment of Pupils' Progress*, the Student Teachers rated themselves as being predominately both highly prepared and highly competent. In the case of the subject-specific items and *Teaching of Mixed Ability Pupils, Teaching of Less Able Pupils, Teaching of Socially Deprived Pupils, Administrative Duties, Pastoral Duties, Teaching of Pupils with Special Needs, Liaison with Parents,* the larger majority of Student Teachers felt both barely prepared and barely competent. A fairly equal distribution of Student Teachers rated themselves either barely prepared and barely competent or highly prepared and highly competent on the items: *Use of Audio-Visual Equipment, Environmental Studies* and *Language in Learning.* When the ties were excluded it was discovered that in the case of *Programme Planning* there was an equal number of Student Teachers who felt they were more competent than prepared on this item as there were who felt the opposite. In the case of *Art and Craft* more Student Teachers felt that they were more prepared than competent on this item. On all the other items there were consistently more Student Teachers who felt they were more competent than prepared.

In an examination of the item groupings (see Table 6.3) significant differences ($p<0.001$) were found for all the groupings, with Perceived Competence higher than

Table 6.3 Differences and Correlations between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence in the the item groupings for Student Teachers (N=72)

Differences between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence in the item groupings for the Student Teachers							
	Perceived Preparation		Perceived Competence				
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Wilcoxon Z	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	32.89	6.06	36.59	6.42	-4.9221	0.0001	*
More General Professional Items	7.5	2.68	13.52	3.55	-6.2706	0.0001	*
Subject-Specific Items	24	9.78	27.46	9.49	-4.2427	0.0001	*
Correlations between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for the Student Teachers							
	r	t-value					
Classroom-Specific Items	0.64	15.03*					
More General Professional Items	0.28	2.88*					
Subject-Specific Items	0.77	21.64*					
*p<0.001							

Perceived Preparation. Fairly strong correlations resulted for the Classroom-specific items (0.64) and the Subject-specific items (0.77), whereas a low correlation resulted for the More General Professional items (0.28).

6.2.1 The Student Teacher Primary and Secondary sub-groups

An investigation of the primary and secondary sub-groups (see Table 6.4) revealed that in the case of the Student Teachers there was no overall significant differences between these two sub-groups for both Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence. No significant differences were identified between these two groups on all the items, except *Use of Audio-Visual Equipment* (Secondary Student Teachers rating themselves higher) and *Religious Education* (Primary Teachers rating themselves higher) in the case of Perceived Preparation; and *Art and Craft* (Primary Teachers rating themselves higher) in the case of Perceived Competence ($p < 0.05$).

Also, in terms of the item groupings (see Table 6.5) no significant differences were revealed between the Primary and Secondary sub-groups.

6.3 The First Year Teachers

Table 6.6 represents the mean scores of the items on Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for the First Year Teachers. Generally, on all the classroom-specific items and the more general professional skills, the First Year Teachers feel more prepared than competent. The opposite is true for the subject-specific items, except *Religious Education* and *Social Studies*. The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks Test was employed to check for significant differences between the two sets of ratings. Overall there is a significant difference between the Perceived Preparation and the Perceived Competence of the First Year Teachers. Significant differences were established for all items, except *Questioning Techniques, English Creative Writing, Mathematics, Religious Education, Social Studies, Environmental Studies and Physical Education*. On these items the ratings on Perceived Preparation and Perceived

Table 6.4 Differences on Ratings of Preparation and Competence between Primary and Secondary Student Teachers

		Primary Teachers (N = 24)		Secondary Teachers (N = 48)		Mann-Whitney U		
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Z	P	
	Preparation							
Items								
1	Language in Learning	3	1.1	3.13	1.04	-1.2623	0.7978	ns
2	Questioning techniques	3.75	0.96	3.56	0.9	-1.2756	0.8206	ns
3	Programme Planning	3.25	1.5	3.53	1.14	-1.2573	0.7801	ns
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	3.5	1	2.9	1.28	-9.6577	0.3198	ns
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	3	1.01	3.5	1	-8.6778	0.1974	ns
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	3	0.82	2.34	0.91	-8.0325	0.1496	ns
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	3.5	0.58	3.15	0.97	-1.1144	0.5152	ns
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	2	0.89	2.28	0.99	-1.1877	0.6349	ns
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	3.5	1	3	1.25	-1.0165	0.3771	ns
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	1.25	0.5	1.6	0.87	1.0652	0.4111	ns
11	Administrative Duties	1.5	0.58	1.43	0.74	-1.1664	0.5441	ns
12	Pastoral Duties	1.5	0.58	1.66	1.05	-1.3092	0.8632	ns
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	1.75	0.5	2.74	1.05	-5.9844	0.0479	*
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	2	0.816	1.9	0.87	-1.2267	0.7127	ns
15	Equal Opportunities	2.25	0.96	2.85	1.25	-9.9875	0.3497	ns
16	Liaison with Parents	2.25	0.96	1.84	0.92	-9.8542	0.3242	ns
17	Maltese Reading	3	0.82	2.34	1.35	0.9256	0.2652	ns
18	English Reading	3	0.82	2.5	1.3	-1.0945	0.5001	ns
19	Maltese Creative Writing	3.25	0.5	2.21	1.37	-7.0522	0.0907	ns
20	English Creative Writing	2.75	0.5	2.43	1.31	-1.1025	0.5158	ns
21	Mathematics	2.75	0.5	2.4	1.2	-1.0533	0.4316	ns
22	Religious Education	3	0.88	2	1.2	-5.8767	0.0422	*
23	Social Studies	2.5	0.58	2.31	1.32	-1.1344	0.5565	ns
24	Environmental Studies	3	0.82	2.87	1.3	-1.3356	0.9494	ns
25	Art and Craft	3	0.82	2.42	1.27	-9.877	0.3335	ns
26	Physical Education	1.75	0.5	2.29	1.22	-1.0654	0.4472	ns
	Overall Mean Score	76	6.73	71.64	15.01	-1.0988	0.5065	ns
	Competence							
1	Language in Learning	3.75	0.5	3.29	0.83	-9.2321	0.2475	ns
2	Questioning techniques	3.75	0.96	3.62	1	-1.3453	0.9687	ns
3	Programme Planning	3.25	0.5	3.62	0.95	-9.7667	0.3094	ns
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	3.75	0.5	3.29	1.1	-9.8562	0.3354	ns
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	3.5	0.58	3.78	0.9	-1.0766	0.4497	ns
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	3.25	0.5	2.72	0.81	-8.1331	0.1458	ns
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	3.25	0.5	3.44	0.8	-1.0952	0.4786	ns
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	3.25	0.5	2.81	1.1	-1.0744	0.4583	ns
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	3.75	0.5	3.46	1.13	-1.1987	0.6605	ns
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	2.25	1.5	2.26	0.96	-1.3101	0.8974	ns
11	Administrative Duties	2	0.82	2.47	1.17	-1.0721	0.4616	ns
12	Pastoral Duties	2.25	0.5	2.56	1.31	-1.2155	0.7137	ns
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	2.25	0.5	3.25	1.21	-0.6572	0.0712	ns
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	2.75	0.96	2.18	0.91	-9.0543	0.2338	ns
15	Equal Opportunities	3.25	0.5	3.29	0.95	-1.2352	0.7439	ns
16	Liaison with Parents	2.75	0.5	3	1.02	-1.0953	0.4956	ns
17	Maltese Reading	3.25	0.5	2.65	1.23	-9.2522	0.2706	ns
18	English Reading	3	0.82	2.82	1.28	-1.2621	0.8008	ns
19	Maltese Creative Writing	3.5	0.58	2.6	1.3	-2.7712	0.1361	ns
20	English Creative Writing	3.25	0.96	2.82	1.28	-1.1133	0.5237	ns
21	Mathematics	3.5	1	3	1.32	-1.0054	0.3712	ns
22	Religious Education	3.25	0.5	2.5	1.25	-1.9245	0.2631	ns
23	Social Studies	2.5	0.58	2.78	1.27	-1.1422	0.5775	ns
24	Environmental Studies	2.75	0.5	3.03	1.12	-1.0552	0.4341	ns
25	Art and Craft	3.5	0.58	2.38	1.17	-5.8151	0.0476	*
26	Physical Education	2.25	0.5	2.74	1.19	-1.0052	0.3687	ns
	Overall Mean Score	86.75	3.2	83.76	15	-1.1213	0.5549	ns
	* $p < 0.05$							
	ns = Not Significant							

Table 6.5 Differences on Ratings of Preparation and Competence for the First Year Primary and Secondary sub-groups

	Primary Teachers (N=24)		Secondary Teachers (N=48)		Mann-Whitney U		
Preparation	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Z	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	32.5	6.06	32.98	6.07	-1.3423	0.9606	ns
More General Professional Items	8.5	2.01	8.43	2	-1.2552	0.7943	ns
Subject-Specific Items	28	5.09	23.77	3.76	-1.0822	0.4891	ns
Competence							
Classroom-Specific Items	37	10.1	36.57	9.6	-1.2882	0.8438	ns
More General Professional Items	12	2.8	12.47	2.9	-1.1424	0.5845	ns
Subject-Specific Items	30.75	9.4	27.32	8.6	-1.1556	0.6049	ns
ns=Not Significant							

Table 6.6 Differences between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for the First Year Teachers (N=135)

		Perceived Preparation			Perceived Competence						
Items		Mean Score	S D	Rank	Mean Score	S D	Rank	Wicoxon Z	P		PP:PC
1	Language in Learning	2.8	1.01	22	2.43	1.08	21	-4.1232	0.0001	***	PP>PC
2	Questioning techniques	2.53	1.1	25	2.39	1.08	24	-1.5585	0.1191	ns	-
3	Programme Planning	2.45	1.21	26	2.05	0.98	26	-4.2371	0.0001	***	PP>PC
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2.99	1.16	20	2.41	0.91	22.5	-5.4969	0.0001	***	PP>PC
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	2.84	1.12	21	2.64	0.99	20	-2.4854	0.0129	*	PP>PC
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	3.7	1.17	17	2.99	1.04	15	-6.0452	0.0001	***	PP>PC
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	2.79	1	23	2.41	1	22.5	-3.7627	0.0002	***	PP>PC
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	3.73	1.19	16	2.97	1.13	16	-6.0782	0.0001	***	PP>PC
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	2.63	1.16	24	2.21	1.14	25	-4.5944	0.0001	***	PP>PC
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	4.32	0.86	5	3.52	1.13	12	-6.5171	0.0001	***	PP>PC
11	Administrative Duties	4.46	0.88	1	3.1	1.15	14	-8.7347	0.0001	***	PP>PC
12	Pastoral Duties	4.45	0.82	2	3.13	1.1	13	-8.6436	0.0001	***	PP>PC
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	3.3	1.06	18	2.79	1.1	19	-4.7341	0.0001	***	PP>PC
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	4.34	0.79	4	4.05	0.87	11	-3.2288	0.0012	**	PP>PC
15	Equal Opportunities	3.24	1.17	19	2.9	1.25	17	-3.4021	0.0007	***	PP>PC
16	Liaison with Parents	4.2	0.97	7	2.81	1.14	18	-8.8721	0.0001	***	PP>PC
17	Maltese Reading	3.96	1.26	14	4.21	1.3	6	-2.8678	0.0041	**	PP<PC
18	English Reading	4.1	1.13	9	4.33	1.15	2	-2.0564	0.0397	*	PP<PC
19	Maltese Creative Writing	3.94	1.34	15	4.16	1.38	10	-2.3063	0.0211	*	PP<PC
20	English Creative Writing	4.15	1.17	8	4.27	1.23	4	-1.1248	0.2607	ns	-
21	Mathematics	4	1.28	13	4.18	1.34	9	-1.7927	0.0731	ns	-
22	Religious Education	4.28	1.1	6	4.23	1.28	5	-0.4872	0.6261	ns	-
23	Social Studies	4.37	1.08	3	4.2	1.26	7	-1.5871	0.1125	ns	-
24	Environmental Studies	4.06	1.3	11	4.28	1.2	3	-1.9451	0.0518	ns	-
25	Art and Craft	4.08	1.3	10	4.55	1.54	1	-3.2001	0.0014	**	PP<PC
26	Physical Education	4.03	1.35	12	4.19	1.4	8	-1.2615	0.2071	ns	-
	Overall Mean Score	95.74	16.06		87.4	17.87		-3.5344	0.0001	***	PP>PC
	* $p < 0.05$										
	** $p < 0.01$										
	*** $p < 0.001$										
	ns = Not Significant										

Competence are almost identical. The First Year Teachers seem to consider their competence on these items to be linked more directly to their preparation. On the remaining subject-specific items: *Maltese Reading, English Reading, Maltese Creative Writing* and *Art and Craft,* the First Year Teachers felt significantly more competent than prepared. However, on the other classroom-specific and more general professional items the First Year Teachers felt less competent than prepared.

The more general professional items: *Administrative Duties, Pastoral Duties, Social Studies, Teaching Pupils with Special Needs, Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils* and *Liaison with Parents* which rank as the highest on Perceived Preparation by the First Year Teachers receive an average ranking on Perceived Competence. Inversely, the subject-specific items like *Religious Education, English Creative Writing, English Reading, Art and Craft, Environmental Studies, Physical Education, Mathematics, Maltese Reading* and *Maltese Creative Writing* received average rankings on Perceived Preparation but the highest rankings on Perceived Competence. In terms of Perceived Preparation the order of the items is practically reversed for First Year Teachers when compared to that of the Student Teachers. There is also a much weaker correspondence between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence within this group when compared to the Student Teachers.

Again, Kendall's tau rank correlation coefficient (Kendall's tau-b) was employed to establish the relationship between the self-estimates of preparation and those of competence for the First Year Teachers (N=135). The results obtained are shown in Table 6.7. There is a fairly strong overall correlation (0.66) between the Perceived Preparation and the Perceived Competence of First Year Teachers. Again as with the Student Teachers, the stronger correlations are registered for most of the subject-specific and classroom-specific items. The more general professional items register lower correlations. On all the subject-specific items and most of the classroom-specific items the First Year Teachers registered a lower correlation between the perceived levels of preparation and competence than the Student Teachers. However for the items: *Teaching More Able Children, Equal opportunities, Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils, Administrative Duties, Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils* and *Pastoral Duties*; the correlation between the perceived levels of Preparation and Competence for these items was higher than that obtained by the Student Teachers.

Table 6.7 The Relationship between the Self-Ratings of Preparation and Competence of the First Year Teachers

Items	r†	t-value
1) Maltese Reading	0.65	9.04*
2) Maltese Creative Writing	0.61	8.07*
3) Teaching More Able Pupils	0.59	9.33*
4) Plan a Programme	0.57	10.55*
5) Questioning Techniques	0.54	8.56*
6) Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching	0.54	7.43*
7) Equal Opportunities	0.53	8.72*
8) Language in Learning	0.52	7.75*
9) Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	0.49	7.27*
10) Mathematics	0.48	5.77*
11) English Reading	0.45	6.17*
12) Assessment of Pupils' Progress	0.44	5.65*
13) Physical Education	0.43	5.35*
14) Social Studies	0.43	4.71*
15) Teaching Average Ability Pupils	0.41	5.92*
16) Teaching Less Able Pupils	0.40	6.31*
17) Environmental Studies	0.40	4.75*
18) Liaison with Parents	0.39	5.64*
19) English Creative Writing	0.38	4.88*
20) Administrative Duties	0.38	5.55*
21) Audio-visual Equipment	0.38	5.18*
22) Religious Education	0.38	4.56*
23) Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	0.36	5.34*
24) Pastoral Duties	0.30	4.37*
25) Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	0.27	3.43*
26) Art and Craft	0.24	2.51*
Overall Relationship	0.66	9.54*

† N = 135
* p< 0.001

An investigation of the cross tabulations between the Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Ratings for each item was conducted (See Appendix IV, p. 327). An examination of the ties indicated that on all the subject-specific items, *Teaching of Pupils with Special Needs, Pastoral Duties, Administrative Duties* and *Teaching of Socially Deprived Pupils*, the First Year Teachers rated themselves as being predominately both highly prepared and highly competent. In the case of

Language in Learning, Questioning Techniques, Programme Planning, Assessment of Pupils' Progress, Effectiveness of own Teaching, Teaching of Average Ability Pupils and *Teaching of More Able Pupils,* the larger majority of the First Year Students felt both barely prepared and barely competent. A fairly equal distribution of First Year Teachers rated themselves either barely prepared and barely competent or highly prepared and highly competent on the items: *Teaching of Mixed Ability Pupils, Teaching Less Able Pupils, Use of Audio-Visual Equipment, Liaison with Parents* and *Equal Opportunities.*

When the ties were excluded it was discovered that in the case of the subject-specific items, with the exclusion of Social Studies, more First Year Teachers felt that they were more competent than prepared on this item. On all the other items there were consistently more First Year Teachers who felt they were more prepared than competent.

In an examination of the item groupings (see Table 6.8) significant differences ($p<0.001$) were found for the Classroom-specific items and the More General Professional items, with Perceived Preparation higher than Perceived Competence. Fairly strong correlations resulted for the Classroom-specific items (0.72), whereas moderate correlations resulted for the More General Professional items (0.56) and the Subject-specific items (0.52).

6.3.1 The First Year Primary and Secondary sub-groups

An investigation of the primary and secondary sub-groups (see Table 6.9) revealed that in the case of the First Year Teachers there are significant differences between these two sub-groups for both Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence. Significant differences were identified between these two groups for *Pastoral Duties* ($p < 0.05$), *Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils, Teaching Average Ability Pupils, English Reading, English Creative Writing* ($p < 0.01$), *Maltese Reading* and *Maltese Creative Writing* ($p < 0.001$) [Secondary Teachers rating themselves higher] in the case of Perceived Preparation and *Language in Learning, Questioning Techniques, Assessment of Pupils' Progress, Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils* ($p < 0.05$) and the teaching of the

Table 6.8 Differences and Correlations between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence in the item groupings for First Year Teachers (N=135)

Differences between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence in the item groupings for the First Year Teachers							
	Perceived Preparation		Perceived Competence				
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Wilcoxon Z	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	33	7.62	28.19	7.44	-9.9565	0.0001	*
More General Professional Items	21.75	2.95	16.61	3.91	-1.7899	0.0001	*
Subject-Specific Items	41	10.66	42.6	11.5	-1.7225	0.087	ns
Correlation between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for the First Year Teachers							
	r	t-value					
Classroom-Specific Items	0.72	19.02**					
More General Professional Items	0.56	9.83**					
Subject-Specific Items	0.52	14.99**					
ns=Not Significant							
*p<0.001							

Table 6.9 Differences on Ratings of Preparation and Competence between Primary and Secondary First Year Teachers

		Primary Teachers (N = 27)		Secondary Teachers (N = 108)		Mann-Whitney U		
	Preparation	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Z	P	
Items								
1	Language in Learning	2.41	1.12	2.86	0.99	-8.0911	0.177	ns
2	Questioning techniques	2.41	1.06	2.54	1.11	-9.3663	0.6447	ns
3	Programme Planning	2.35	1.27	2.47	1.21	-9.3855	0.6575	ns
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2.76	1.25	3.02	1.15	-8.8913	0.4349	ns
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	2.82	1.33	2.84	1.09	-9.8652	0.9094	ns
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	2.88	1.41	3.81	1.09	-6.0722	0.0065	**
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	2.18	0.95	2.88	0.98	-5.7645	0.0031	**
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	3.53	1.23	3.75	1.19	-8.8815	0.4272	ns
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	2.41	1.06	2.66	1.18	-8.8545	0.4181	ns
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	4.06	1.03	4.36	0.83	-8.5155	0.2666	ns
11	Administrative Duties	4.24	1.03	4.49	0.86	-8.8054	0.3333	ns
12	Pastoral Duties	4.06	1.03	4.51	0.77	-7.4224	0.0454	*
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	3.24	0.56	3.31	1.12	-9.2244	0.5761	ns
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	4.41	0.62	4.33	0.82	-9.9666	0.959	ns
15	Equal Opportunities	3.12	1.36	3.25	1.15	-9.6812	0.8112	ns
16	Liaison with Parents	4.06	1.14	4.22	0.94	-9.405	4	ns
17	Maltese Reading	2.41	1.23	4.19	1.1	-3.1222	0.0001	***
18	English Reading	3.35	1.12	4.2	1.09	-5.8045	0.002	**
19	Maltese Creative Writing	2.65	1.37	4.13	1.24	-4.3845	0.0001	***
20	English Creative Writing	3.47	1.23	4.25	1.13	-6.2755	0.0049	**
21	Mathematics	3.53	1.33	4.07	1.27	-7.6845	0.0853	ns
22	Religious Education	4.06	1.14	4.31	1.09	-8.4654	0.2338	ns
23	Social Studies	4.18	1.24	4.4	1.06	-8.9087	0.3562	ns
24	Environmental Studies	3.71	1.36	4.11	1.29	-8.2023	0.1688	ns
25	Art and Craft	4	1.37	4.09	1.29	-9.4889	0.6794	ns
26	Physical Education	3.88	1.5	4.05	1.33	-9.2645	0.5651	ns
	Overall Mean Score	86.18	17.14	97.1	15.5	-6.3001	0.0133	*
	Competence							
1	Language in Learning	2	1	2.49	1.08	-7.2212	0.0473	*
2	Questioning techniques	1.82	0.95	2.47	1.08	-6.5622	0.0154	*
3	Programme Planning	1.82	0.95	2.08	0.98	-8.4774	0.272	ns
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	1.94	0.66	2.47	0.92	-6.8354	0.0219	*
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	2.71	1.05	2.64	0.98	-9.0854	0.5069	ns
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	2.41	1.12	3.07	1.01	-6.6723	0.0204	*
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	2.06	1.03	2.47	0.98	-7.4952	0.066	ns
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	2.88	1.36	2.98	1.1	-9.4856	0.7056	ns
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	1.88	0.99	2.26	1.16	-8.0552	0.1636	ns
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	3.18	1.02	3.57	1.14	-7.8805	0.1419	ns
11	Administrative Duties	2.71	1.16	3.16	1.14	-7.9252	0.15	ns
12	Pastoral Duties	3	0.87	3.14	1.13	-9.1354	0.5392	ns
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	2.65	1	2.81	1.12	-9.3251	0.6278	ns
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	3.76	0.75	4.09	0.88	-7.6955	0.0995	ns
15	Equal Opportunities	2.47	1.38	2.96	1.22	-7.7252	0.1156	ns
16	Liaison with Parents	2.47	1.23	2.86	1.12	-8.2054	0.2112	ns
17	Maltese Reading	1.88	0.78	4.55	0.98	-9.7533	0.0001	***
18	English Reading	2.41	0.94	4.6	0.89	-1.3052	0.0001	***
19	Maltese Creative Writing	1.88	0.86	4.48	1.1	-1.3767	0.0001	***
20	English Creative Writing	2.24	0.83	4.56	0.97	-1.5337	0.0001	***
21	Mathematics	2.29	0.92	4.44	1.16	-1.9951	0.0001	***
22	Religious Education	2.18	0.88	4.53	1.04	-1.4552	0.0001	***
23	Social Studies	2.18	0.95	4.49	1.01	-1.5051	0.0001	***
24	Environmental Studies	2.82	1.19	4.49	1.05	-2.8898	0.0001	***
25	Art and Craft	2.82	1.38	4.8	1.05	-1.9146	0.0001	***
26	Physical Education	2.65	1.41	4.41	1.26	-3.2484	0.0001	***
	Overall Mean Score	63.11	16.29	90.87	15.22	-2.0835	0.0001	***
	* $p < 0.05$							
	** $p < 0.01$							
	*** $p < 0.001$							
	ns = Not Significant							

subject-specific items ($p < 0.001$) [Secondary Teachers rating themselves higher] in the case of Perceived Competence. On all these items the Secondary sub-group registered a higher level of confidence than the Primary sub-group. No significant differences resulted between the two groups in the case of the other items.

In terms of the item groupings (see Table 6.10) the Perceived Preparation of the Secondary sub-group was significantly higher than that of the Primary sub-group for the Subject-Specific items. The Perceived Competence of the Secondary sub-group was significantly higher than that of the Primary sub-group for both the Classroom-Specific items and the Subject-Specific items.

6.4 The More Experienced Teachers

Table 6.11 represents the mean scores for the items ranked for Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence of the More Experienced Teachers. On all the items the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves higher on preparation than on competence. The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks Test was employed to check for significant differences between the ratings. There is an overall significant difference between the Perceived Preparation and the Perceived Competence of the More Experienced Teachers. Significant differences were established for all items, except *Maltese Reading*. On all the other items the More Experienced Teachers felt significantly less competent than prepared.

The four highest ranked items on Perceived Preparation: *Pastoral Duties, Administrative Duties, Liaison with Parents,* and *Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils*, are given average rankings for Perceived Competence. The subject-specific items are ranked high to average on both Perceived Preparation and Competence. The item: *Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils* is ranked highly on Perceived Preparation but has an average ranking on Perceived Competence. The remaining items are ranked as average to low on both Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence by the Experienced Teachers.

Table 6.10 Differences on Ratings of Preparation and Competence for the Primary and Secondary sub-groups

	Primary Teachers (N=27)		Secondary Teachers (N=108)		Mann-Whitney U			
Preparation	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Z	P		
Classroom-Specific Items	30.11	9.28	33.39	7.31	-8.8136	0.179	ns	
More General Professional Items	20.83	3.76	21.91	2.8	-8.3852	0.268	ns	
Subject-Specific Items	35.24	9.39	41.8	10.6	-6.2352	0.0074	**	
Competence								
Classroom-Specific Items	24.65	8.54	28.7	7.17	-6.9652	0.0418	*	
More General Professional Items	15.12	3.2	16.82	3.96	-7.4851	0.057	ns	
Subject-Specific Items	23.35	6.48	45.35	9.17	-1.1925	0.0001	***	
ns=Not Significant								
*p<0.05								
**p<0.01								
***p<0.001								

Table 6.11 Differences between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for the More Experienced Teachers (N=146)

		Perceived Preparation			Perceived Competence						
Items		Mean Score	S D	Rank	Mean Score	SD	Rank	Wilcoxon Z	P		PP:PC
1	Language in Learning	2.55	1.23	24	2.07	0.95	24	-5.0759	0.0001	***	PP>PC
2	Questioning techniques	2.47	1.1	25	2.19	0.85	21	-2.7412	0.0061	**	PP>PC
3	Programme Planning	2.19	1.03	26	1.84	0.95	26	-3.3232	0.0009	***	PP>PC
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2.71	0.97	23	2.09	0.86	23	-6.0551	0.0001	***	PP>PC
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	2.82	1.06	21	2.25	0.79	20	-6.2644	0.0001	***	PP>PC
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	4.05	1.05	7.5	2.77	0.99	15	-8.9383	0.0001	***	PP>PC
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	3.06	0.9	20	2.1	0.79	22	-8.6618	0.0001	***	PP>PC
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	3.76	1.05	13	2.79	1.05	14	-6.9134	0.0001	***	PP>PC
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	2.79	1.03	22	1.92	0.88	25	-7.4023	0.0001	***	PP>PC
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	4.14	0.98	4	3.21	1.16	11.5	-7.3178	0.0001	***	PP>PC
11	Administrative Duties	4.31	1.12	2	2.75	1.33	15	-8.7553	0.0001	***	PP>PC
12	Pastoral Duties	4.4	0.84	1	2.88	1.21	13	-9.1975	0.0001	***	PP>PC
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	3.21	1.21	19	2.65	1.01	17	-4.3675	0.0001	***	PP>PC
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	4.05	0.99	7.5	3.7	1.14	1	-3.1735	0.0015	**	PP>PC
15	Equal Opportunities	3.23	1.33	18	2.41	1.27	19	-6.3167	0.0001	***	PP>PC
16	Liaison with Parents	4.16	0.98	3	2.5	1.09	18	-9.1855	0.0001	***	PP>PC
17	Maltese Reading	3.36	1.34	17	3.21	1.56	11.5	-1.7993	0.072	ns	PP>PC
18	English Reading	3.61	1.31	15	3.25	1.56	10	-4.2451	0.0001	***	PP>PC
19	Maltese Creative Writing	3.6	1.33	16	3.35	1.52	8	-2.5805	0.0099	**	PP>PC
20	English Creative Writing	3.83	1.23	12	3.28	1.52	9	-5.4866	0.0001	***	PP>PC
21	Mathematics	3.64	1.29	14	3.45	1.54	6	-2.4238	0.0154	*	PP>PC
22	Religious Education	3.94	1.16	10	3.61	1.46	3.5	-3.7074	0.0002	***	PP>PC
23	Social Studies	4.05	1.16	7.5	3.44	1.5	7	-5.2909	0.0001	***	PP>PC
24	Environmental Studies	4.06	1.19	6	3.51	1.47	5	-5.1728	0.0001	***	PP>PC
25	Art and Craft	4.07	1.14	5	3.61	1.44	3.5	-4.2379	0.0001	***	PP>PC
26	Physical Education	3.86	1.26	11	3.68	1.33	2	-2.8921	0.0038	**	PP>PC
	Overall Mean Score	91.92	14.77		74.51	21.9		-5.7434	0.0001	***	PP>PC
	* $p < 0.05$										
	** $p < 0.01$										
	*** $p < 0.001$										
	ns = Not Significant										

Again, Kendall's tau rank correlation coefficient (Kendall's tau-b) was employed to establish the relationship between the self-estimates of preparation and those in competence for the experienced teachers (N = 146). The results obtained are shown in Table 6.12.

There is a fairly strong overall correlation (0.72) between the Perceived Preparation and the Perceived Competence of the More Experienced Teachers. Again, as with the Student Teachers, a moderately high relationship (>0.5) between self-estimates of preparation and competence was established for the subject-specific items for the experienced teachers. An average relationship was obtained for the more classroom specific skills. And, a low relationship (<0.4) between self-estimates in preparation to teach and competence in teaching was registered for those items which are considered to require skills and qualities, extraneous to what can be obtained strictly from the training course: *Teaching of Socially Deprived Children, Administrative Duties, Teaching of Less Able Children, Pastoral Duties, Liaison with Parents, Use of Audio-Visual Equipment* and *Teaching of Children with Special Needs.* All the relationships were found to be significant ($p < .001$).

When compared to the First Year Teachers, the Experienced Teachers registered a higher degree of correlation between the perceived levels of preparation and competence for all the subject-specific skills and the *Teaching of Socially Deprived Children.* For these More Experienced Teachers, who have from two to four years of teaching experience, the relationship between their perceived levels of preparation and competence are closer to those of the Student Teachers than they are to those of the First Year Teachers.

An investigation of the cross tabulations between the Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Ratings for each item was conducted (See Appendix IV, p. 354). An examination of the ties indicated that on the subject-specific items and *Teaching of Socially Deprived Children* and *Teaching of Children with Special Needs,* the Experienced Teachers rated themselves as being predominately both highly prepared and highly competent. In the case of the items: *Language in Learning, Questioning Techniques, Programme Planning, Assessment of Pupils' Progress, Effectiveness of own Teaching, Teaching of Average Ability Pupils, Teaching of More Able Pupils, Use of Audio-Visual Equipment* and *Equal Opportunities*, the larger majority of the

Table 6.12 The Relationship between the Self-Ratings of Preparation and Competence of the More Experienced Teachers

Item	r†	t-value
1) Maltese Reading	0.71	18.63*
2) English Reading	0.64	21.71*
3) Maltese Creative Writing	0.64	15.06*
4) Mathematics	0.62	15.06*
5) Physical Education	0.59	15.7*
6) English Creative Writing	0.58	16.88*
7) Religious Education	0.57	16.25*
8) Language in learning	0.56	9.94*
9) Social Studies	0.55	12.2*
10) Environmental Studies	0.52	14.91*
11) Effectiveness of own teaching	0.51	7.64*
12) Equal Opportunities	0.46	6.37*
13) Teaching More Able Pupils	0.44	4.67*
14) Art and Craft	0.43	4.84*
15) Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	0.42	5.80*
16) Plan a Programme	0.42	3.87*
17) Teaching Average Ability Pupils	0.41	7.11*
18) Questioning Techniques	0.41	3.81*
19) Assessment of Pupils' Progress	0.41	5.32*
20) Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	0.40	6.77*
21) Teaching Administrative Duties	0.34	4.52*
22) Teaching Less Able Pupils	0.30	2.67*
23) Pastoral duties	0.30	4.62*
24) Liaison with Parents	0.30	3.11*
25) Audio-visual equipment	0.27	2.33*
26) Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	0.23	2.29*
Overall Relationship	0.72	18.67*

† N = 146
* $p < 0.001$

Final Year Student Teachers felt both barely prepared and barely competent. A fairly equal distribution of Final Year Student Teachers rated themselves either barely prepared and barely competent or highly prepared and highly competent on the items: *Teaching of Mixed Ability Pupils, Teaching of Less Able Pupils, Administrative Duties, Pastoral Duties* and *Liaison with Parents.* When the ties were excluded it was discovered that on all the items there were More Experienced Teachers who felt they were more prepared than competent.

In an examination of the item groupings (see Table 6.13) significant differences ($p<0.001$) were found for all the groupings, with Perceived Preparation higher than Perceived Competence. Fairly strong correlations resulted for the Subject-specific items (0.88) and the Classroom-specific items (0.64), whereas a moderate correlation resulted for the More General Professional items (0.49).

6.4.1 The More Experienced Primary and Secondary sub-groups

An investigation of the primary and secondary sub-groups (see Table 6.14) revealed that in the case of the More Experienced Teachers significant overall differences were identified between these two groups for both Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence. Significant differences were obtained for *Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching* (Secondary Teachers rating themselves higher),*Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils* ($p < 0.05$) [Primary Teachers rating themselves higher], and the subject-specific items ($p < 0.001$) [Primary Teachers rating themselves higher] in the case of Perceived Preparation and *Teaching Less Able Pupils* ($p < 0.05$) [Primary Teachers rating themselves higher] and the subject-specific items ($p < 0.001$) [Secondary Teachers rating themselves higher] in the case of Perceived Competence. On all these items the sub-group of Secondary Teachers registered a higher level of confidence than the Primary sub-group. No significant differences resulted between the two groups in the case of the other items.

In the case of the item groupings (see Table 6.15) the Perceived Preparation and the Perceived Competence of the Secondary sub-group were significantly higher than those of the Primary sub-group for only the Subject-Specific items.

Table 6.13 Differences and Correlation between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence in the item groupings for the More Experienced Teachers (N=146)

Differences between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence in the item groupings for the More Experienced Teachers							
	Perceived Preparation		Perceived Competence				
	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Wilcoxon Z	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	32.7	6.09	25.08	6.06	-1.8242	0.0001	*
More General Professional Items	21.05	3.17	15.04	4.04	-1.9535	0.0001	*
Subject-Specific Items	38	9.79	34.39	12.7	-7.0864	0.0001	*
Correlation between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for the More Experienced Teachers							
	r	t-value					
Classroom-Specific Items	0.64	15.08*					
More General Professional Items	0.49	6.46*					
Subject-Specific Items	0.88	20.13*					
*p<0.001							

Table 6.14 Differences on Ratings of Preparation and Competence between Primary and Secondary More Experienced Teachers

		Primary Teachers (N = 50)		Secondary Teachers (N = 96)		Mann-Whitney U		
	Preparation	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Z	P	
Items								
1	Language in Learning	2.6	1.23	2.52	1.23	-2.2735	0.5896	ns
2	Questioning techniques	2.22	1.02	2.59	1.13	-1.9672	0.0627	ns
3	Programme Planning	2.02	0.87	2.28	1.1	-2.1353	0.25534	ns
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2.52	0.89	2.8	1	-2.1075	0.2012	ns
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	2.52	1.04	2.97	1.05	-1.8425	0.0168	*
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	4.2	1.21	3.97	0.96	-1.9085	0.0312	*
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	3.08	0.97	3.05	0.86	-2.3715	0.9014	ns
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	3.66	0.92	3.81	1.12	-2.0401	0.1202	ns
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	2.86	1.25	2.75	0.91	-2.3135	0.7095	ns
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	3.98	1.12	4.22	0.9	-2.1522	0.27	ns
11	Administrative Duties	4.08	1.32	4.43	0.99	-2.1155	0.1642	ns
12	Pastoral Duties	4.44	0.81	4.39	0.85	-2.2965	0.6264	ns
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	3.08	1.26	3.27	1.18	-2.2115	0.4245	ns
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	3.98	1.06	4.08	0.96	-2.2993	0.659	ns
15	Equal Opportunities	3.08	1.32	3.31	1.33	-2.1625	0.3153	ns
16	Liaison with Parents	4	1.18	4.25	0.86	-2.2145	0.4081	ns
17	Maltese Reading	2.78	0.91	3.67	1.43	-1.5144	0.0002	**
18	English Reading	2.64	1.03	4.11	1.15	-8.9454	0.0001	**
19	Maltese Creative Writing	3.22	0.89	3.8	1.48	-1.5765	0.0004	**
20	English Creative Writing	3.02	1.06	4.25	1.1	-9.6655	0.0001	**
21	Mathematics	2.92	1.1	4.01	1.22	-1.2065	0.0001	**
22	Religious Education	3.32	1.15	4.26	1.04	-1.2785	0.0001	**
23	Social Studies	3.62	1.12	4.28	1.12	-1.4915	0.0001	**
24	Environmental Studies	3.56	1.3	4.32	1.05	-1.4865	0.0001	**
25	Art and Craft	3.76	0.89	4.23	1.21	-1.5155	0.0001	**
26	Physical Education	3.46	1.07	4.07	1.3	-1.5315	0.0002	**
	Overall Mean Score	84.62	14.28	95.69	13.6	-1.3876	0.0001	**
	Competence							
1	Language in Learning	1.96	0.97	2.13	0.94	-2.1365	0.2452	ns
2	Questioning techniques	2.1	0.86	2.24	0.84	-2.1755	0.3147	ns
3	Programme Planning	1.94	1.1	1.78	0.87	-2.2686	0.5586	ns
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	1.98	0.8	2.15	0.89	-2.2025	0.3868	ns
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	2.06	0.68	2.34	0.83	-1.9756	0.0536	ns
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	2.9	1.02	2.7	0.98	-2.1462	0.2727	ns
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	2.12	0.75	2.09	0.82	-2.3215	0.7268	ns
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	3.02	0.96	2.68	1.08	-1.9133	0.0361	*
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	1.86	0.81	1.95	0.92	-2.3075	0.6843	ns
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	3.18	1.12	3.23	1.19	-2.3463	0.8166	ns
11	Administrative Duties	2.62	1.31	2.82	1.34	-2.1875	0.3697	ns
12	Pastoral Duties	2.68	1.15	2.99	1.24	-2.0322	0.1171	ns
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	2.54	0.79	2.71	1.11	-2.2264	0.4518	ns
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	3.54	1.01	3.78	1.2	-2.0212	0.1053	ns
15	Equal Opportunities	2.38	1.18	2.43	1.32	-2.3945	0.9813	ns
16	Liaison with Parents	2.26	1.03	2.63	1.11	-1.9604	0.0577	ns
17	Maltese Reading	2.2	1.05	3.74	1.53	-1.1125	0.0001	**
18	English Reading	2.14	1.07	2.83	1.46	-9.5557	0.0001	**
19	Maltese Creative Writing	2.28	0.95	3.91	1.47	-1.0005	0.0001	**
20	English Creative Writing	2.18	0.92	3.85	1.45	-9.9012	0.0001	**
21	Mathematics	2.32	1.29	4.03	1.32	-9.1522	0.0001	**
22	Religious Education	2.48	1.17	4.2	1.25	-8.1845	0.0001	**
23	Social Studies	2.46	1.23	3.95	1.38	-1.0567	0.0001	**
24	Environmental Studies	2.64	1.16	3.97	1.41	-1.1215	0.0001	**
25	Art and Craft	2.88	1.12	3.99	1.46	-1.2405	0.0001	**
26	Physical Education	3.26	1.03	3.9	1.43	-1.6285	0.0008	**
	Overall Mean Score	63.98	18.35	79.02	21.96	-1.2654	0.0001	**
	* $p < 0.05$							
	** $p < 0.001$							
	ns = Not Significant							

Table 6.15 Ratings of Preparation and Competence between Primary and Secondary More Experienced Teachers in the item groupings

	Primary Teachers (N=50)		Secondary Teachers (N=96)		Mann-Whitney U		
Preparation	Mean Score	SD	Mean Score	SD	Z	P	
Classroom-Specific Items	31.84	6.05	33.32	6.08	-2.0042	0.161	ns
More General Professional Items	20.48	3.72	21.37	2.83	-2.1505	0.144	ns
Subject-Specific Items	32.3	6.66	41	9.86	-1.1952	0.0001	***
Competence							
Classroom-Specific Items	24.86	6.04	25.2	6.1	-2.3296	0.757	ns
More General Professional Items	14.28	3.9	15.45	4.08	-2.0425	0.094	ns
Subject-Specific Items	24.84	8.31	38.37	11.37	-8.4625	0.0001	***
ns=Not Significant							
*p<0.05							
**p<0.01							
***p<0.001							

6.5 Summary

It can be concluded that:

1) On most of the items studied the Student Teachers felt significantly more competent than prepared. It seems that these Student Teachers feel that in terms of the majority of the items studied their high level of Perceived Competence did not derive entirely from their preparation.

A fairly strong correlation was identified between the ratings on Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence of the Student Teachers. A moderate to high correlation between preparation and competence was found for most of the subject-specific items and the classroom specific items. A low correlation was found for the more general professional skills.

2) For most of the items the First Year Teachers indicated a higher level of competence than that of preparation. On four of the subject-specific items, the First Year Teachers felt significantly more competent than prepared. On the remaining subject-specific items and *Questioning Techniques,* a significant difference between preparation and competence did not result. The First Year Teachers seem to consider their competence on these items to be deriving more directly from their preparation.

On all the subject-specific items and most of the classroom-specific items the First Year Teachers registered a lower correlation between the levels of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence than the Final Year Student Teachers.

It seems that the First Year Teachers, who are well into their first year of teaching, are more sceptical about the relationship between their Perceived Preparation and their Perceived Competence on all the subject-specific and most of the classroom-specific items than the Final Year Student Teachers. However, the First Year Teachers come to appreciate increasingly more than the Final Year Student Teachers the relationship between their Perceived Preparation and their Perceived Competence on the other items.

3) Again, as with the Student Teachers, a moderately high relationship between self-estimates of Preparation and Competence was established for the subject-specific items for the More Experienced Teachers. An average relationship was obtained for the more classroom specific skills. And, a low relationship between self-estimates in preparation to teach and competence in teaching was registered for those items which are considered to require skills and qualities, extraneous to what can be obtained strictly from the training course.

When compared to the First Year Teachers, the More Experienced Teachers registered a higher degree of correlation between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for all the subject-specific skills. For these More Experienced Teachers, who have from two to four years of teaching experience, the relationship between their Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence is closer to that of the Student Teachers than it is to that of the First Year Teachers.

Student Teachers feel significantly more competent than prepared. There is a good match in terms of how items on Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence are ranked. On some items Perceived Competence reflects directly their perceived level of preparation. On those items which are of a more pastoral and administrative nature the Student Teachers feel especially more competent than prepared.

On some of the subject-specific items the First Year Teachers feel significantly more competent than prepared. However on the majority of the items the First Year Teachers feel significantly more prepared than competent. As with the Student Teachers there are a number of items on which the First Year Teachers rate themselves similarly on both Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence. On all the items, with the exception of *Maltese Reading* which has similar ratings for Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence, the More Experienced Teachers feel significantly less competent than prepared.

Consistently, for the three cohorts the relationship between perceived levels of Preparation and Competence is fairly to highly strong for the subject-specific and most of the classroom-specific items. However, the relationship is weak for those items like *Liaison with Parents* and *Pastoral Duties*, which require wider professional skills.

4) When comparing the Primary and Secondary sub-groups of the Student Teachers cohort, significant differences resulted on only three items of the Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence questionnaires. However in the case of the First Year Teachers, the Primary sub-group felt significantly less well prepared on some of the items of Perceived Preparation and less competent on all the subject-specific items. In the case of the More Experienced Teachers the Primary sub-group felt significantly less well prepared on the subject-specific items of the Perceived Preparation Questionnaire and less competent on the subject-specific items of the Perceived Competence Questionnaire. It is evident that the opportunity to practice their skills on the subject-specific items in the Primary classroom has led the First Year Teachers to feel less well prepared and less confident about their competence on these items, than their secondary colleagues. The same is the case for the More Experienced Teachers. In fact the Primary sub-group of the More Experienced Teachers, too, feel less well prepared and competent than their secondary colleagues on all the subject-specific items. However, the level of Competence of the Primary sub-group of the More Experienced Teachers is not as low as that of the similar sub-group of First Year Teachers. It is particularly in the First Year that the primary sub-group of teachers records a significantly very low level of competence on the subject-specific items when compared to their secondary colleagues.

In terms of the item groupings, for the Student Teachers, no significant differences were revealed between the Primary and Secondary sub-groups. In the case of the First Year Teachers, the Perceived Preparation of the Secondary sub-group was significantly higher than that of the Primary sub-group for the subject-specific items. The Perceived Competence of the Secondary sub-group was significantly higher than that of the Primary sub-group for both the Classroom-Specific items and the Subject-Specific items. For the More Experienced Teachers, the Perceived Preparation and the Perceived Competence of the Secondary sub-group were significantly higher than those of the Primary sub-group for only the Subject-Specific items.

PART THREE THE CLASSROOM STUDY

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BEGINNING TEACHERS IN THE CLASSROOM

7.1 Introduction

The large survey study set out to identify the Perceived Preparation and competence of three cohorts: Student Teachers, First Year Teachers and More Experienced Teachers. The homogeneity of the training and classrooms experienced by the various cohorts studied enabled the use of the three cohorts to provide developmental evidence in their career progression.

Beginning teachers' feelings of competence may influence their ability to perform teaching tasks. From a reciprocal deterministic perspective, if student and beginning teachers see themselves as competent they may teach more confidently, secure pupil receptiveness, and further augment their confidence (Housego, 1990a & 1990b). To believe that one is competent to teach may be as important an antecedent of successful teaching as any acquired credential. Ashton and Webb (1986) found that teachers with higher self-efficacy were more likely to have a positive classroom environment. High teacher efficacy was positively associated with teachers' use of praise, individual attention to students, less use of criticism, frequent checking on students' progress in learning, and high student achievement on mathematics and language tests (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Teachers' perceptions of their own teaching abilities influence their choice of classroom management and instructional strategies.

This follow-up classroom study to the larger survey work was conducted by observing nine of the teachers in their first teaching post. The main aim of this study was to establish whether the typology of Perceived Competence of the larger survey study (see

5.5, p.145) might be demonstrated in classroom performance. It set out to identify possible differences in the classroom practice between those teachers who have a high level of Perceived Competence and those who have a low level of Perceived Competence and to provide a description of the practice of these primary teachers in their first teaching post. This study seeks to link perceptions of competence in teaching behaviours with effective teacher behaviours for a sub-sample of the beginning teachers. To reduce the confounding effect of context all the teachers from the primary school level who were the most recent graduates from the B.Ed.(Hons) course were chosen. From the original group of eleven, two had moved to the secondary level, thus only nine remained available for study.

7.2 Research Questions

The main objectives of this classroom study are to investigate the differences within the sub-sample of nine teachers under study between those teachers who have a high level of Perceived Competence and those who have a low level of Perceived Competence in terms of their actual classroom behaviour. This behaviour was assessed through two instruments: Teachers' Use of Time and Teacher' Feedback Patterns.

Thus the two main research questions of this classroom study are:

1) Are there differences between the teachers who have a high level of perceived competence and those who have a low level of Perceived Competence in terms of Teachers' Use of Time as represented by *Academic Time* (*Whole Class, Small Group & Checking Classwork*) and *Non-academic Time* (*Daily Rituals, Transition, Preparation/Paperwork, Intellectual Games & Unfocused Small Talk*) ?

2) Are there differences between the teachers who have a high level of perceived competence and those who have a low level of Perceived Competence in terms of Teachers' Feedback Patterns as represented by *Teachers' Praise, Criticism, Persistence* and *Lack of Persistence* ?

7.3 Characteristics of the Observed First Year Teachers

Out of the nine first year primary teachers observed, eight were in their mid-twenties and one was in her mid-thirties as she had followed the B.Ed.(Hons) course as a mature student. Before that she had already been teaching in that same school as a casual teacher for a number of years. Three of the teachers taught a Year 1 class (5/6 year-olds), two of them taught a Year 2 class (6/7 year-olds) and four of them taught a Year 3 class (7/8 year-olds). Three of the classes are based in Primary 'A' schools, that is schools which house only the first three levels of Primary classes and the rest in Primary 'C' schools which house all the levels of Primary school classes. Primary 'B' schools house the later three years of primary school classes. Five of the schools are situated in urban areas, whereas the other five are situated in suburban areas. Due to the rapid urbanisation of the countryside in Malta, during the last few years, and because of the short distances, there are no state schools which are situated in rural areas.

The nine primary school teachers in their first year of teaching who were observed and interviewed were all female and represented a wide range of state Maltese primary schools. These are presented in Table 7.1 with the level and type of school where they teach.

A more detailed description of primary schooling in Malta and the classroom practice of the nine teachers studied is presented in Appendix VI, p. 388.

7.4 Procedure

The observation sessions in Maltese Primary classrooms took place between mid-April and mid-June 1993. The last week of April was taken up with negotiating access to the schools (although this process had been originally initiated through the mail) and practising on the observation schedules with a retired teacher colleague at a Maltese Primary school. These preliminary observations did not form part of the sample. The actual observations themselves were spread over eight weeks.

Table 7.1 The Primary Teachers with Level Taught, Type of School and Areas of Specialisation on the Teacher Education Course

Teacher	Level Taught	Type of School	Teaching Area I	Teaching Area II
Teacher 1	Year 2	urban 'A'	English	EMY*
Teacher 2	Year 2	suburban 'A'	Maltese	EMY
Teacher 3	Year 3	urban 'C'	English	EMY
Teacher 4	Year 3	urban 'C'	Maltese	EMY
Teacher 5	Year 3	suburban 'C'	Mathematics	EMY
Teacher 6	Year 3	urban 'C'	Social Studies	EMY
Teacher 7	Year 1	suburban 'C'	English	EMY
Teacher 8	Year 1	urban 'A'	Maltese	EMY
Teacher 9	Year 1	suburban 'C'	Mathematics	EMY

* Early and Middle Years Component

After clearance from the Department of Education was obtained the observer visited the schools in order to meet the heads and teachers and to arrange a convenient time for the observations. At the majority of the schools the observer was very well received and the teachers were very helpful. At each school the purpose of the data collection was explained to the heads and teachers concerned. An initial session of two hours was spent by the observer in each classroom to become familiar with the situation. In this regard the previous experience of working in Maltese classrooms: teaching, conducting observation work and monitoring students on their teaching practice stood the observer in good stead. Then, after making arrangements with the teacher, which were subject to confirmation by the head, the observer revisited the school to spend three mornings of observation (for about 7.6 hours in all) in each classroom. The last day of observation was followed by an interview. The observer could not visit the schools on three consecutive Wednesdays as the Sports Day was cancelled twice over because of

rain showers. There was also one week when the observer could not visit because the Junior Lyceum exams which are held on a national basis were held during that week. Although only the Year 6 classes were involved in these exams, other teachers who teach the other years are asked to invigilate and the schools operate on a different time schedule during that week.

At every school the observer tried to act as informally as possible in a situation where visitors to schools are normally treated in a very formal manner. Wherever possible the observer tried to avoid being accompanied by the head to the classroom. However some insisted on doing this. When in the classroom the observer sat at the back in order to be as inconspicuous as possible. There were times when either the teacher or the pupils tried to involve the observer in the lesson. However in a polite manner he tried to remain as uninvolved as possible. As in most schools there were a number of teachers whom the observer knew personally and in order not to seem unfriendly, he spent a few minutes talking to them and to their colleagues in the school yard during the mid-morning break. At first the observer thought that this would put him in an awkward position as they would press him with questions about what he was up to. However this was not the case as the large majority just did not bother as they must have assumed that as usual the observer must have been monitoring some student teacher on school experience. The very few who bothered to ask the observer what he was doing were satisfied with his response that he was doing some data-collection and did not query him any further.

7.4.1 Instruments used to describe and code Classroom Behaviour

The instruments and schedules used in the present study are presented in Table 7.2. Data were collected in three different ways; through the coding instruments: Teacher-use-of-time measure (TuT) and the Question-answer-feedback sequence measure (QAF), the descriptive instruments: Session Summary (S1), Daily Summary Sheet (S2), Descriptive Account (S3), and the Grouping Instrument (G1) and the Interview Schedules.

Table 7.2 Instruments used to Describe and Code Classroom Behaviour

Title	Focus
Teacher-use-of-time measure (TuT)	This instrument codes a teacher's behaviour whenever activities are introduced or changed by the teacher. It enables one to measure the proportion of time a teacher spends on activities related to teaching and academic learning. (adapted from Good and Brophy, 1984)
Question-answer-feedback measure (QAF)	This instrument codes teacher and student dyadic sequence behaviour during question and answer interchanges. The quality of the student's response and the nature of the teacher's feedback to the student are coded. (adapted from Good and Brophy, 1984)
Session Summary (S1)	Physical layout of the classroom, seating of a all pupils, outline of curricular contents and methods used; apparatus, resources, etc. and incidents. Order and time of observations.
Daily Summary Sheet (S2)	Class timetable, and outline of organisation to include all activities whether observed or not.
Descriptive Account (S3)	Narrative account of the impressions of the observer as regards the teacher, classroom climate, teaching methods, etc.
Grouping Instrument(GI)	Physical layout, grouping policy and rationale.
<u>The Teachers' Interview</u>	
Teachers' Interview (TI)	After the final observation session an interview was conducted with the class teacher in order to examine how these beginning teachers felt about teaching and their training. They were asked too why they had adopted specific strategies and practices. Interviews with teachers were tape-recorded and transcribed.

Interview Schedule

The following areas were covered in the interview schedule:

1) How do you feel about teaching?
2) What gives you satisfaction/dissatisfaction?
3) In what ways do you feel that your teaching now is different from when you started?
4) Where do you feel that you have made most progress?
5) Which aspect of your professional skills do you feel need further development?
6) From whom do you receive support if any at all?
7) How do you feel about the syllabus/curriculum?
8) Where do you see yourself in four years' time?

(These general questions were supplemented by others which hinged upon the answers given and the classroom observations.)

Descriptive accounts of the classroom sessions and the teachers' responses are presented in Appendix VI, p. 388.

7.5 Classification of Teachers

The classification of teachers was based on the two factors identified in the factor analysis in Chapter Five (see 5.5, p.145). The aggregate factor scores were computed for the nine primary teachers (see Table 7.3) on the two factors, Factor 1 (representing a beginning teacher's sense of competence in teaching the various subject areas and to a lesser degree in more general classroom skills) and Factor 2 (representing a beginning teacher's sense of competence in more general classroom skills and lack of competence in the subject specific areas). This ensured that the overall Perceived Competence of each individual on all the variables is considered. Teachers 1-4 are those teachers with a high level of Perceived Competence and Teachers 5-9 are those teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence. This classification took place after the observation study was completed. Throughout the observation the observer was blind to the different types of teachers being observed. The limited sample size (N=9) was recognised and thus raw data were reported and interpreted descriptively, as recommended by Cooper & Good (1983).

7.6 Teacher Effects

Research throughout these last two decades has indicated that effective teaching demands the orchestration of a wide array of skills that must be adapted to specific contexts. Brophy (1986) reviews research that shows that students achieve more when their teachers emphasise academic objectives in establishing expectations and allocating time, use effective management strategies to ensure that academic learning time is maximised, pace students through the curriculum briskly but in small steps that allow high rates of success, and adapt curriculum materials based on their knowledge of students' characteristics. Teachers differ in how they perform such instructional behaviours as giving information, asking questions, and providing feedback. Brophy (1986) concludes that any attempt to improve student achievement must be based on the development of effective teaching behaviour.

For the purpose of this classroom study which succeeds the larger survey study presented earlier the two variables: *Teachers' Use of Time* and *Teachers' Feedback Patterns* have been focused upon.

7.6.1 Teachers' Use of Time

The most consistently replicated findings link students' achievement to their opportunity to learn the material and, in particular, to the degree to which teachers carry the content to them personally through active instruction and move them through the curriculum at a brisk pace.

Direct Instruction and Student -Engaged Time

Rosenshine (1976) first introduced the term direct instruction into the field of educational research. He used this term to describe the series of teaching behaviours that were correlated with increased levels of achievement. His emphasis is on general teaching techniques, such as increased teaching time, use of reinforcement, and organisational structures for classrooms. The majority of studies used to determine this

list of teaching techniques were completed with primary students. Rosenshine's model is based, in part, on the results of the following noteworthy experimental studies: the Direct Instruction Follow Through Program (Becker, 1977), the Texas Elementary School Study (Emmer *et al.*, 1982), and the Missouri Mathematics Effectiveness Study (Good & Grouws, 1979).

Opportunity to learn is related to amount learned, whether measured in pages of curriculum covered (Borg, 1979; Good *et al.*, 1978) or percentage of test items taught through classroom instruction or recitation activities (Arehart, 1979; Armento, 1977; Cooley & Leinhardt, 1980; Dunkin & Doenau, 1980; Nuthall & Church, 1973; Smith, 1979b). Opportunity to learn is determined by length of school day and school year but is also determined by the four variables discussed next. Achievement is maximised when teachers emphasise instruction as basic to their role, expect students to master the curriculum, and allocate most available time to academic activities (Brophy & Evertson, 1976: Fisher *et al.*, 1980; Stallings, 1975). Such teachers are seen as businesslike and task oriented, and they allocate most classroom time to activities with academic objectives rather than other objectives or no clear objectives at all.

Not all time allocated to academic activities is actually spent engaged in these activities. Engagement rates depend on the teacher's ability to organise the classroom as an efficient learning environment where activities run smoothly, transitions are brief and orderly, and little time is spent getting organised and dealing with misconduct. High task-engagement rates attained through successful classroom management are among the most powerful correlates of student achievement (Brophy & Evertson, 1976; Coker *et al.*, 1980; Fisher *et al.*, 1980; Good & Grouws, 1979; Stallings, 1975; Stallings, Cory, Fairweather & Needels, 1977, 1978).

Effective managers establish efficient learning environments that support effective instruction. Their classrooms reveal (a) good preparation of the physical environment and installation of rules and procedures at the beginning of the year (with instruction and practice in these procedures where necessary), (b) continuous monitoring of the entire classroom, (c) smoothness and continued momentum in lesson pacing (accomplished through good instructional preparation and through subtle intervention techniques that re-establish attention without disrupting the flow of the lesson, (d) variety and appropriate level of challenge in assignments, (e) clear accountability

procedures and consistent follow-up concerning work quality and completion, and (f) clarity about how students can get help when they need it and about what options are available when they finish their work (Brophy, 1983; Doyle, 1986; Good & Brophy, 1984, 1986).

Consistent Success and Academic Learning Time

To learn efficiently, students must be engaged in activities of an appropriate difficulty level. It is important not only to maximise content coverage by pacing students briskly through the curriculum but also to see that they make continuous progress all along the way, moving through small steps with high or at least moderate rates of success and minimal confusion or frustration (Brophy & Evertson, 1976; Fisher *et al.*, 1980). High (90-100%) success rates are highly desirable when students must work independently for extended periods without teacher supervision. Lower (but still relatively high) success rates are acceptable when the teacher is present to provide guidance and immediate feedback. To define the importance of high rates of success, Fisher *et al.* (1980) coined the term *academic learning time* (ALT), which they defined as the time that students spend engaged in academic tasks that they can perform with high success rates. ALT consistently showed significant positive correlations with achievement in their study.

These findings on quantity of instruction indicate that teachers who systematically pursue academic objectives elicit higher achievement than teachers (a) who fail to pursue any clear objectives at all, (b) who are unable to accomplish academic objectives for lack of management skills, or (c) who concentrate mostly on affective objectives. Also, teachers who carry the content to their students personally through active instruction get better results than teachers who rely on individualised learning modules and other materials-based approaches. The latter approaches work under some circumstances but not in the ordinary classroom where one teacher must work with a relatively large number of pupils. Individualised instruction is sound as an abstract notion, but in practice it means that student must work on their own for extended periods of time, trying to learn without much guidance from the teacher. This requires a combination of functional literacy, direction-following and independent-learning skills, and sustained motivation that is rare in the primary grades and evident in only a minority of older students. Even bright and well-motivated students develop

incomplete or erroneous concepts when left on their own too long (Erlwanger, 1975). Individualised learning packages can be used effectively in special classes with small student/teacher ratios (Crawford, 1983), but in typical classes, teachers cannot get around to each student often enough.

In summary, some teachers are more effective than others at eliciting student achievement, and active instruction from and supervision by the teacher is crucial to the progress of most students. This implies that 'teacher-proof curricula' and related approaches that depend on curriculum materials (or computer programs, for that matter) to carry the content to the students cannot work under the constraints imposed by the typical classroom. Thus, unless they are prepared to change the basic nature of schooling, would-be innovators will need to work through, not around, teachers.

Brookover *et al.* (1978), in their investigation of school climate variables influencing achievement, found that teachers in high-achieving schools spent longer proportions of time in instruction and demonstrated greater concern and commitment to their students' achievement. Brophy and Evertson (1977) reported that teachers who were successful in producing student learning gains in the Texas Teacher Effectiveness Study tended to have higher expectations and assumed personal responsibility for making sure that students learned. Gibson and Dembo (1984) stated that:

> 'One would predict that teachers who believe student learning can be influenced by effective teaching, *and who also have confidence in their own teaching abilities*, should persist longer, provide a greater academic focus in the classroom, and exhibit different types of feedback than teachers who have lower expectations concerning their ability to influence student learning.' (p.43)

The description of efficacious teachers indicates that they may be more likely to have a stronger academic focus in their classrooms. There is evidence from teacher effectiveness research that the amount of time spent directly on instruction is related to gains in student achievement, whereas time spent in non instructional activities (e.g., games and art) is related to negative gains (Stallings & Kaskowitz, 1974). Stallings and Hentzell (1979) found that the use of games and other non-academic materials (that is, that which did not involve formal teaching) was more frequently observed in less effective teachers' classrooms.

Efficacious teachers may tend to use elements of direct instruction that include a pattern of behaviour used by effective primary teachers: structured academic activities supervised by the teacher, extensive content coverage, monitoring of student performance, specific questioning of students with immediate feedback, and use of whole class instruction. Good (1982) maintained that a teacher's willingness to stay with a student in a failure situation is indicative of a teacher's confidence in his or her teaching ability and/or the student's ability to learn.

More effective teachers conducted more large group and/or whole class instruction while less effective teachers worked with individual students, small groups, or had students working independently (Crawford & Stallings, 1978; Medley, 1978; Stallings & Hentzell, 1979). Rosenshine (1979) stated that such studies indicate that students spend more time off task and in transition when they are working alone, whereas the use of large group settings allows for more adult supervision.

7.6.2 Pupil groupings

The findings of differences in pupil grouping have consistently been found in the teacher effectiveness literature. More effective teachers conducted more large group and/or whole class instruction while less effective teachers worked with individual students, small groups or had students working independently (Crawford & Stallings, 1978; Medley, 1978; Stallings & Hentzell, 1979). Rosenshine (1979) stated that such studies indicate that students spend more time off task and in transition when they are working alone, whereas the use of large group settings allows for more adult supervision. It is likely that when teachers are only working with individual or small groups of children they are unable to provide supervision for the rest of the students, who as a result receive less academically engaged time.

Students achieve more in classes where they spend most of their time being taught or supervised by their teachers rather than working on their own or not working at all (Arehart, 1979; Brophy & Evertson, 1976; Good & Grouws, 1977; Stallings, 1975; Stallings *et al.*, 1977, 1978). These classes include frequent lessons (whole class or small group, depending on grade level and subject matter) in which the teacher presents

information and develops concepts through lecture and demonstration, elaborates this information in the feedback given following responses to recitation or discussion questions, prepares the students for follow - up assignments by giving instructions and going through practice examples, monitor progress on assignments after releasing students to work independently, and follows up with any needed feedback or reteaching. The teacher carries the content to the students personally, rather than depending on curriculum materials alone to do so, but conveys information mostly in brief presentations followed by recitation or application opportunities. There is a great deal of teacher talk, but most of it is academic rather than procedural or managerial, and much of it involves asking questions and giving feedback rather than extended lecturing.

7.6.3 Teachers' Feedback Patterns

Teachers who provide regular and extensive feedback elicit higher achievement than other teachers (Brophy, 1986). It is important that correct responses be acknowledged as such (because even if the respondent knows that the answer is correct, some onlookers may not) but not that such positive feedback include praise (verbal or affective delivery of social reward that goes beyond mere affirmation). The frequency of praise usually correlates positively with achievement, but these correlations are usually quite low and sometimes are negative (Brophy & Evertson, 1976; Stallings, 1975). Teachers who maximise achievement gains are sparing rather than effusive in praising correct answers. Praise is more likely to be effective when specific rather than global, when used with dependent or anxious rather than confident students, and when delivered in ways that focus attention on the content or accomplishment rather than the teacher or recipient of the praise. Public praise of students who supply correct answers may be intrusive or distracting and may embarrass the recipient if the accomplishment was not especially praiseworthy in the first place. One should not automatically construe teacher praise as reinforcement; this is only one of its many possible purposes and effects (Brophy, 1981).

In responding to students' partly correct or incorrect answers, it appears that teachers should acknowledge whatever part may be correct and then, if there are good prospects

for success, try to elicit an improved response. Teachers who produce high achievement gains are more likely than other teachers to sustain the interaction with the original respondent by rephrasing the question or giving clues, rather than to terminate it by giving the answer or calling on someone else (Anderson *et al.*, 1979; Clark *et al.*, 1979). This will depend somewhat on the question and the student, however; sometimes continued attempts to elicit an improved response amount to 'pointless pumping' (Brophy & Evertson, 1976; Good *et al.*, 1978).

In reacting to student-initiated questions and comments, teachers who elicit higher achievement discourage irrelevant student initiations but respond positively to relevant ones by answering them, redirecting them to the class, or incorporating them into the lesson (Evertson *et al.*, 1980; Flanders, 1970).

Hughes (1973) dealt with teacher reactions to student response. Pupils in the 'reacting' group were given frequent praise for correct answers and support, along with occasional urging or mild reproach when they failed to respond correctly. Pupils in the 'no reacting' group generally received little more than a statement of the correct answer. The 'reacting' group outgained the 'no reacting' group, both on items related to questions asked during the lesson and on other items. Taken together, Hughes' data suggest that, by seventh grade, pupils can learn effectively without overt participation in lessons, but that their learning can be affected by teachers' reactions to the responses of the students who do participate. These teacher reaction effects appear to have been motivational (mediated by the enthusiasm and demands communicated in the 'reacting' treatment) rather than instructional (the 'reacting' treatment did not involve greater opportunity to participate or get information).

In the literature related to teacher expectations, differential teacher feedback behaviours have been found to be demonstrated by many teachers toward high- and low-expectation students. Good (1981) reported that not staying with low-expectation students in failure situations, criticising low-expectation more frequently than high-expectation students for incorrect responses, and praising low-expectation less frequently than high-expectation students after correct answers, are among the behaviours consistently found in teacher expectation research. Expectation effects are influenced by style differences (Brophy and Good, 1974)

There has been recognition that expectation effects do not occur consistently across teachers. Cooper *et al.* (1980) noted behaviour differences among teachers at both the intraclass and interclass levels of analysis. Brophy and Good (1974) pointed out that style differences among teachers influence expectation effects. These noted style differences may in fact be a result of the degree of confidence in his or her competence in teaching that a teacher possesses.

7.6.4 Coding Teachers' Use of Time

This observation instrument (see Appendix VII, p. 419) is used to record whenever activities are introduced or changed. Its main purpose is to see if the teacher spends time primarily on activities related to teaching and learning. It records starting time and elapsed time for the teacher activities listed below. When more than one activity is going on, the activity in which the teacher is involved is recorded. Each teacher was observed for approximately 7.6 hours, over three mornings. Time allocation measures for the following categories are recorded. The examples are taken from the Maltese context:

1) Daily rituals (prayer, song, register, washroom, distribution of milk, collections, etc.)
2) Transitions between activities,
3) Whole class lessons or tests (academic curriculum),
4) Small group lessons or tests (academic curriculum),
5) Going around the room checking classwork or small group assignments,
6) Doing preparation or paperwork while class does something else,
7) Intellectual games and contests (namely quizzes),
8) Unfocused small talk

Total academic time was also computed by summing the total minutes of categories 3, 4 and 5 for each group. The remaining categories observed were summed to yield a total non-academic time variable.

7.6.5 Coding Question-Answer-Feedback Sequences

Teacher and student behaviours are coded during question-and-answer interchanges. Whenever the teacher asks a question and calls on a student to respond, the observers code information about the quality of the student's response, and about the nature of the teacher's feedback reaction to the student. The coding instructions (Good & Brophy, 1984) are presented in Appendix VII, p. 422.

Coding sheets (Good & Brophy, 1984), presented in Appendix VII, p. 421, are prepared so that the above information can be quickly recorded by entering check marks in appropriate places on the coding sheet. The coding sheet is organised to follow the time sequence involved in coder decision making, so that in coding a given interchange, the coder moves from left to right across the page. When the teacher selects a student to respond, the coders after noting the student's response and the teacher's reaction to it, code the quality of the response by entering a check mark under +, $\pm$, --, or 0. Finally, they code the teacher's feedback reaction by entering one or more check marks in the appropriate teacher reaction columns. If, for example, the teacher simply affirmed that a correct response was correct and then went on to another question and another student, coders would enter a check mark in the + column. However, if the teacher had praised the response and then asked the same student another question, coders would have entered check marks in both the + + and the New Questions columns.

Once the teacher's response to the student's answer (or failure to answer) has been coded, the information for that particular question-answer-feedback sequence is complete, and coders drop down in the next row and move back to the left side of the coding sheet to be prepared for coding the next sequence. The next sequence may be with the same student (if the teacher has repeated the question, rephrased or given a clue, or asked a new question, giving the student a second opportunity to respond), or it may be with a new student. In this way, each row contains information about a single question-answer-feedback sequence, and this interaction can be reconstructed from the coding sheets.

Measures of teacher praise and criticism were controlled for absolute frequency differences in students' correct and incorrect responses. The measure of teacher praise was derived by dividing the number of teacher praises by the number of correct student responses. This praise-per-successful interaction measure indicates the frequency of rewarding behaviour with the number of correct responses held constant. Similarly, the number of teacher criticisms was divided by the number of incorrect student responses.

Data were also analysed to determine teacher persistence in a failure situation (i.e. when a student answered unsuccessfully). Teacher persistence was defined as the ratio of feedback interactions in which a teacher either repeated the question, provided a clue, or asked a new question following a student's incorrect response. The number of teacher persistent behaviours was divided by the total number of student incorrect responses. Conversely, lack of persistence in failure situations was defined as the ratio of feedback interactions in which a teacher either gave the answer, asked another student, or allowed another student to call out the answers when a student failed to respond or responded unsuccessfully. The number of teacher non-persistent behaviours was divided by the total number of student incorrect responses. Brophy & Good (1988) suggest that when teacher feedback patterns are expressed as raw frequencies (i.e., number of academic praise statements observed) rather than being adjusted for frequencies and types of student academic responses (i.e., proportion of correct answers observed that were praised by the teacher), their interpretation is ambiguous. All types of academic feedback occur more often during activities in which academic responses are elicited more often in the first place (i.e., drill or recitation lessons). Therefore, a positive correlation for frequency of academic praise may occur because of a linkage between achievement and the frequency of active instruction by the teacher, and not because of a more specific linkage between student achievement and teachers' tendencies to praise good academic responses when they are elicited.

7.7 Data Analysis

One-tailed *t* tests with the teacher as the unit of analysis were used to analyse differences between the two groups of teachers in teacher behaviours related to academic focus, teacher feedback, and teacher persistence.

Reliability for the *Teachers' Use of Time* and *Feedback* instruments was established by coding at a local school in two classes alongside a retired teacher colleague over a week for 20 hours. A comparison of our codes revealed almost perfect agreement (99%). This allowed the coding to proceed independently in the target classes. However, halfway through the observations, reliability was tested for again for 20 hours in one of the classes at a school where the retired teacher colleague had been an assistant head. Complete coder agreement (100%) was achieved.

Two types of measures were derived from the raw coding sheets. Total minutes allocated by the teachers to each of the observation categories were used to analyse the data from the teacher-use-of-time instrument. The second set of measures was ratio figures derived from the question-answer-feedback sequence instrument in which absolute frequency differences across teachers were statistically controlled in order to allow a comparison of relative differences between groups (Brophy & Good, 1970; Cooper & Baron, 1977).

7.7.1 Limitations of the Study

The limited sample size (N = 9) and the illuminative nature of this study are recognised and thus raw data is reported and interpreted descriptively as recommended by Cooper and Good (1983). As noted by other researchers (e.g. Rosenshine, 1979), the amount of time a teacher allocates for academic instruction, the time a teacher is actually engaged in that instruction , and the time a pupil is engaged may all be quite different amounts of time. Academic time coding in the present study was more a reflection of allocated time and organisation than of academically engaged time or academic focus. Although the teacher-use-of-time measure coded the activity that the teacher had

allocated time for and was engaged in, it did not reflect in any way the pupils' engagement rates.

Caution must be taken in reaching any conclusion regarding the classroom behaviours of teachers with high and low levels of Perceived Competence, until larger samples of teachers are studied. However, the present data do suggest several important hypotheses for future research.

7.8 Results

Time allocation (in minutes) for Teachers'-Use-of-Time variables are presented in Table 7.3. The means and standard deviations of time allocation (in minutes) for Teachers'-Use-of-Time variables are presented in Table 7.4.

Teacher-use-of-time variables were classified under *academic* and *non-academic* categories. For both these categories there were significant overall differences between the group of teachers with a high level of Perceived Competence and the group of teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence. Within the academic subcategories, a significant difference was established between the two groups for *checking classwork.* The teachers with a high level of Perceived Competence spent almost twice as much time *checking classwork* as the teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence. This difference was statistically significant ($p < .05$). However, no significant differences were established between these two groups of teachers in *whole class* and *small group* instruction. For both groups the overall time spent on *small group* instruction was much less than that spent in *whole class* instruction.

Within the non-academic subcategories, significant differences were established for *preparation/paperwork* ($p < 0.001$), *intellectual games* and *unfocused small talk* ($p < .05$). Teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence spent almost twice as much time, or more, as did those with a high level of Perceived Competence on *preparation /paperwork, intellectual games* and *unfocused small talk.* However, no significant

Table 7.3 Time Allocation (in minutes) for Teacher-Use-of-Time-Variables

		Academic Time			Nonacademic Time				
Teachers (N = 9)	Factor Loading*	Whole class	Small group	Checking classwork	Daily rituals	Transition	Preparation/paperwork	Intellectual games	Unfocused small talk
1	3.55	211.3	57.6	46.4	28.8	50.4	35.1	6.8	19.6
2	3.4	166.3	71.2	75.6	38.8	35.6	29.3	10.4	28.8
3	3.28	196.3	83.6	58	8.4	27.2	30.9	29.2	22.4
4	3.05	166.1	55.2	78	9.2	30	39.1	35.6	42.8
5	1.57	86	69.2	40.4	54.4	47.2	67.2	40	51.6
6	1.53	146.9	61.2	22.4	37.6	40.4	57.5	47.6	42.4
7	1.46	130.2	72.8	39.6	24.8	44.4	65.8	39.6	38.8
8	1.39	129.4	64	56.8	9.6	4.4	62.6	70.4	58.8
9	1.38	159.1	74	27.2	16.8	47.6	56.9	40	34.4
	Highest - 4.92 Lowest - 0.71								

* Factor Loadings on Perceived Competence of Observed First Year Primary Teachers

Table 7.4 Means and Standard Deviations of Time Allocation (in minutes) for Teachers' (N=9) Use of Time Variables

	High Level of Perceived Competence		Low Level of Perceived Competence				
Variable	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value	P	
Academic Time	316.4	15.99	235.82	24.99	5.86	0.001	**
Whole class	185	22.56	130.3	27.7	3.26	0.14	ns
Small group	66.9	13.18	68.24	5.53	-0.19	0.859	ns
Checking classwork	64.5	15	37.28	13.41	2.83	0.029	*
Nonacademic Time	139.6	15.99	220.16	25	-5.86	0.001	**
Daily rituals	21.3	15	28.64	17.76	-0.67	0.523	ns
Transition	35.8	10.34	36.8	18.34	-0.1	0.921	ns
Preparation/Paperwork	33.6	4.41	62	4.69	9.33	0.0001	**
Intellectual games	20.5	14.06	47.52	13.22	-2.94	0.024	*
Unfocused small talk	28.4	10.34	45.2	9.89	-2.47	0.046	*
* p<0 .05							
** p<0.001							
ns = Not Significant							

differences between groups were registered for *daily rituals* and *transition* between lessons. Both groups tended to allocate similar proportions of time.

Frequency and ratio counts of Teachers' Feedback patterns are presented in Table 7.5. Table 7.6 presents the means for praise per correct student answer and criticism, persistence, and lack of persistence per incorrect student answer.

The above analysis indicates that there were no significant differences in the *praise per correct pupil answer* between teachers with a high- and low-level of Perceived Competence. However, a significant difference was found for *criticism* ($p = 0.001$), *persistence* and *lack of persistence per incorrect student answer* ($p < 0.05$) Teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence were more likely to go on by giving the answer, asking another student, or allowing another student to call out before a student gave the correct response. It appears that although both groups of teachers did provide students further opportunities to correct their responses (persistence), teachers with a high level of Perceived Competence were more effective in leading students to correct responses through their questioning, whereas teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence would go on to other students or another question (lack of persistence) before the student arrived at the correct response.

7.9 Summary

1) There are overall significant differences between the groups with high and low levels of Perceived Competence for both *academic* and *non-academic time*. A significant difference was established between the two groups of teachers with a high and low level of Perceived Competence for *checking classwork*. The teachers with a high level of Perceived Competence spent almost twice as much time *checking classwork* as the teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence. However, no significant differences were established between these two groups of teachers for *academic time*, *non-academic time* , *whole class* and *small group* instruction. For both groups the overall time spent on *small group* instruction was almost half that spent in *whole class* instruction.

Table 7.5 Frequency and Ratio Counts of Teachers' Feedback Patterns

Frequency Counts of Teachers' Feedback Patterns						
	Teachers				Pupils	
Teachers (N = 9)	Praise	Criticism	Persistence	Lack of Persistence	Correct Answers	Incorrect Answers
1	15	4	14	18	57	32
2	8	7	11	18	42	29
3	7	9	24	22	58	46
4	8	9	8	14	32	22
5	13	28	16	24	63	40
6	35	18	5	21	39	26
7	6	15	9	20	44	29
8	23	17	6	15	29	21
9	9	30	5	44	62	49
Ratio Counts of Teachers' Feedback Patterns						
	Praise (PCA)	Criticism (PInA)	Persistence (PInA)	Lack of Persistence (PInA)		
Teacher 1	0.26	0.13	0.44	0.56		
Teacher 2	0.19	0.24	0.38	0.62		
Teacher 3	0.12	0.2	0.52	0.48		
Teacher 4	0.25	0.41	0.36	0.64		
Teacher 5	0.21	0.7	0.4	0.6		
Teacher 6	0.9	0.69	0.19	0.81		
Teacher 7	0.14	0.52	0.31	0.69		
Teacher 8	0.79	0.81	0.29	0.71		
Teacher 9	1.5	0.61	0.1	0.9		

Table 7.6 Means and Standard deviations of Praise per Correct Answer and Criticism, Persistence, and Lack of Persistence per Incorrect Answer

	High Level of Perceived Competence		Low Level of Perceived Competence				
Variable	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value	P	
Praise (PCA)	0.21	0.06	0.44	0.37	-1.37	0.1362	ns
Criticism (PInA)	0.25	0.12	0.67	0.11	-5.49	0.0001	**
Persistence (PInA)	0.43	0.07	0.26	0.12	2.65	0.0381	*
Lack of Persistence (PInA)	0.58	0.07	0.74	0.12	-2.65	0.0262	*
Note: Means and Standard Deviations are presented as ratio figures							
*p< .05							
**p = 0.001							
ns = Not Significant							

Within the non-academic subcategories, significant differences were established for *preparation/paperwork, intellectual games* and *unfocused small talk*. Teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence spent almost twice as much time as did those with a low level of teacher competence on *preparation / paperwork, intellectual games* and *unfocused small talk.* However, no significant differences between groups were registered for *daily rituals* and *transition* between lessons. Both groups tended to allocate similar proportions of time.

2) There were no significant differences in the *praise per correct pupil answer* between teachers with a high- and low-level of Perceived Competence. However, a significant difference was found for *criticism persistence* and *lack of persistence per incorrect student answer.* Teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence were more likely to go on by giving the answer, asking another student, or allowing another student to call out before a student gave the correct response. It appears that although both groups of teachers did provide students further opportunities to correct their responses (persistence), teachers with a high level of Perceived Competence were more effective in leading students to correct responses through their questioning, whereas teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence would go on to other students or another question (lack of persistence) before the student arrived at the correct response.

The above findings and those from the large survey are discussed in the following section.

PART FOUR DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER EIGHT

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

The first years of teaching have been considered to be of major influence on beginning teachers' professional behaviour (Adams, 1982; Vonk and Schras, 1987). Although much has been written about the first year of teaching (Veenman, 1984), investigations of what happens after the first year of teaching have been conducted within a career-wide perspective (Coates & Thoresen, 1976) and not directed at a teacher's development from the end of training and during the first few years of service. This study has sought to redress the balance by examining the different perceptions of intending and beginning teachers of three cohorts; Student Teachers who are in the final year of their training, teachers who are in their first year of teaching and teachers who have from two to four years of teaching experience. The first year of teaching is considered to be especially crucial in the professional development of a beginning teacher (Gehrke & Yamamoto, 1978; McArthur, 1980, Vonk, 1982 & 1983; Kyriacou, 1993). Hence the group of teachers in their first year of teaching was distinguished from the other beginning teachers with two to four years of teaching experience.

The homogeneity of the training and classrooms experienced by the student and beginning teachers studied here have enabled the use of the three cohorts to provide developmental evidence in their career progression in terms of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence. The Faculty of Education at the University of Malta is the only teacher education institution in Malta and the state schooling system is highly centralised and uniform. Due to the limited occupational mobility in Malta there is

hardly any attrition on the part of teachers in Malta early on or later in their career. Teaching is considered to be a fairly desirable and secure middle class occupation which, within the state sector, bestows the rank of Professional Officer within the Maltese civil service. There is also considerable homogeneity in the intake to the teacher education course. All of the new entrants to the course, with the exception of one or two students every year who qualify for mature status, come into the course directly from one of the sixth-forms.

Student and beginning teachers' perceptions of preparation to teach have been examined within the perspective of Bandura's (1986) efficacy theory as applied to teaching by Ashton and Webb (1986). Perceptions of preparation to teach have been investigated by means of the Perceived Preparation Questionnaire. Confidence in competence to teach has been investigated by means of the Perceived Competence Questionnaire. The link between perceptions of preparation and competence and actual classroom performance was subsequently established for a sub-sample of the beginning teachers.

This study set out to identify to what extent the students and beginning teachers feel that their teacher education course has prepared them to teach. The ratings for Perceived Preparation were analysed for the three different cohorts: Student Teachers, First Year Teachers and More Experienced Teachers in order to establish how their evaluation of the training course was affected by their subsequent experience. Another concern was the extent to which the students and beginning teachers feel that they are competent in teaching. Again the data were analysed for the three cohorts to explore how perceptions of competence are affected by increasing experience of teaching. Differences between ratings of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence were considered for each cohort in turn. This enabled the researcher to establish to what extent the respondents felt that their Perceived Competence is related to their preparation or not. An examination of the correlations between the perceived effects of training and Perceived Competence identified to what extent the ratings in preparation to teach predict the ratings in competence in teaching for each cohort.

The ratings of the Student Teachers and the First Year Teachers were compared to those of outside experts. The relationship between the ratings of the level of preparation offered by the teacher education course as rated by the University Teacher Educators and as perceived by the Student Teachers was analysed. The correlations established

between these two sets of ratings enabled the researcher to establish in which areas of the course there was agreement between these two groups in terms of how they rated the course. The same analytic procedures were adopted to examine the relationship between ratings of the competence of the teachers in their first year in post as observed by the Education Officers of the Maltese Department of Education and the Perceived Competence of these same teachers. Again the correlations established between the two sets of ratings enabled the researcher to establish in which areas of teaching there was agreement between these two groups in terms of ratings of competence.

The follow-up classroom study to the larger survey work set out to identify possible differences in the classroom practice between those teachers who have a high level of Perceived Competence and those who have a low level and to provide a description of the practice of these primary teachers in their first teaching post. This study sought to link perceptions of competence in teaching behaviours with actual classroom practice for a sub-sample of First Year Teachers. The main findings will be reviewed and the implications they have for the professional development of beginning teachers in Malta will be presented.

8.2 Perceived Preparation of Intending and Beginning Teachers

This part of the study set out to identify to what extent the students and beginning teachers feel that their teacher education course has prepared them to teach. The ratings for Perceived Preparation were analysed for the three different cohorts: Student Teachers, First Year Teachers and More Experienced Teachers in order to establish how their evaluation of the training course was affected by their subsequent experience.

On the whole, in terms of Perceived Preparation both groups of beginning teachers (the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers) appreciate their preparation more than the final year Student Teachers. The situation, in terms of Perceived Preparation, between the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers is more stable. The items which comprise the questionnaire on Perceived Preparation did not all show the same direction of effects with time. They seem to fall into three categories which change differentially with increasing professional experience. The

groupings are: the Classroom-Specific items (*Language in Learning, Questioning Techniques, Programme Planning, Assessment of Pupils' Progress, Assessment of the Effectiveness of own Teaching, Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils, Teaching Average Ability Pupils, Teaching Less Able Pupils, Teaching More Able Pupils, Use of Audio-Visual Equipment* and *Equal Opportunities*); More General Professional items (*Administrative Duties, Pastoral Duties, Liaison with Parents, Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils* and *Teaching Pupils with Special Needs*) and Subject-Specific items (*Maltese Reading, English Reading, Maltese Creative Writing, English Creative Writing, Mathematics, Religious Education, Social Studies, Environmental Studies, Environmental Studies, Art and Craft* and *Physical Education*). In the case of the more general professional items, the Student Teachers feel least prepared in these items, whereas the beginning teachers feel better prepared in these items. The subject-specific items receive average rankings by the three cohorts, showing little change with time and experience.

The findings show that their experience leads the beginning teachers to feel more prepared in the general professional skills and less prepared in the classroom-specific skills when compared to the Student Teachers. Gammage (1992) referring to a study mentioned by Schott (1989) relates that students considered competencies in the affective domain to be crucial to success in teaching, but difficult to acquire as part of a teacher education programme. Retrospective assessments of how well a training course prepared students for their task change over time and with classroom experience. This may be because the beginning teachers feel more confident about their teacher training in the actual classroom situation as compared to the Student Teachers in a Teaching Practice situation which tends to be more rigid and which makes the intending teachers feel more constrained than colleagues who are regular class teachers. Many adverse comments were aimed at the Teaching Practice sessions by the final year Student Teachers and the beginning teachers; a large number describing as 'unfair' the practice that students are only given their posting a few days before the Teaching Practice is due to start and that in some cases they would not have met the tutors before they visit in schools. Whilst recognising Teaching Practice as an important component of a professional degree course in education, they feel that there is much disagreement between the university tutors in terms of what is expected of a student on Teaching Practice and great variability in the criteria for assessment. The grades given to students on their Teaching Practice contribute to their final degree classification. It

seems that this state of affairs is not endemic to the Maltese situation. Duffy (1987) in a study of 59 secondary school student teachers in Ireland noted that they encountered conflicting expectations from tutors in relation to their performance on teaching practice. Some studies have focused on the student teachers' self-evaluation processes which they use to determine how well they are doing. McLaughlin (1991), in a study of 26 secondary school teachers in the USA, reported that the student teachers on teaching practice seemed to make greater use of their own judgements regarding what they intended, what happened, and how pupils reacted, than by referring to their cooperating teachers' standard of teaching. The student teachers' notions of good teaching practice were related to the norms of their peers, not to the standard of teaching by teachers. He argues that such data point to the need for student teachers to be helped to articulate and negotiate appropriate criteria to judge their own level of success.

In some cases tutors are seen by the student teachers to be 'out of touch with the classroom reality'. Some feel that there is an overemphasis on the use of teaching aids with the risk of rendering Teaching Practice as 'showbiz'. For some, the burden of this experience is relieved as they move on to full-time regular teaching:

> '...Once I graduated and prepared work to suit my needs and those of my pupils, things were easier and more efficient.'
>
> (First year female primary teacher)

Others still feel anxious about the whole experience:

> 'Thinking back about TP still gives me the creeps and reminds me of all that unnecessary anxiety. It was like the Spanish Inquisition. In fact I avoid the student teachers in our school who are on their TP as I just cannot bear seeing them tense and afraid and hearing them moaning about it.'
>
> (First year female secondary teacher)

It seems that the immediate consumers of the course, with only teaching practice experience in the classroom, tend to be more critical of their training in general. Those with experience as regular classroom teachers (the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers) tend to think more highly of their teacher education course. In areas related to specific classroom skills, the demands of the classroom make those who have regular teaching posts (the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers) feel, when compared to the Student Teachers, less well prepared in these items.

In the HMI (1988) study in the U.K., two-thirds of the 297 new teachers studied were well or reasonably well satisfied with their training and over half considered that appropriate emphasis had been given to the appropriate components of their course. However, substantial proportions felt that the more practical aspects of the course had received too little attention. A third of the primary teachers whose courses had included both professional training and academic subject study thought that academic studies had been over-emphasised. Large proportions of the new teachers surveyed, emerged from training feeling less than adequately prepared for important areas such as teaching the less able and children with special educational needs, and administrative and pastoral duties. A substantial number of new teachers felt that discipline and control had not been adequately dealt with on their courses. Primary teachers felt less than adequately prepared for classroom management, the teaching of reading, teaching the more able and using audio-visual equipment. These changes show that while Teaching Practice retains an important position, the views of the theoretical components and foundation disciplines change with time and are re-evaluated in retrospect.

Three-quarters of the new teachers surveyed by HMI considered that they had, through training, acquired a good understanding of how to *plan a programme of work* over a

period of time. Two-thirds of probationers thought they were well prepared for *classroom management.* Approximately ninety per cent thought they had an adequate understanding of the importance of *language in learning.* Over eighty per cent felt at least adequately prepared in the *use of audio-visual equipment.* Over seventy per cent thought they were well prepared to *assess the effectiveness of their own teaching.* Very few teachers felt that they were well prepared to *assess pupils' work.* About half the new teachers thought they were well prepared to *teach more able pupils* and *to teach less able pupils.* Nearly two-thirds of the teachers thought they were well prepared to *teach mixed ability groups.* Only thirty per cent thought they were well prepared to *teach pupils with special needs* and forty per cent felt they were well prepared to *teach socially deprived pupils.* Three-quarters thought they were well prepared to promote *equal opportunities* in the classroom. Forty per cent felt adequately prepared to perform the *administrative duties* of a teacher and sixty per cent felt adequately prepared for pastoral duties. Less than twenty per cent felt well prepared to *liaise with parents.*

In the case of the primary and middle teachers who participated in the HMI survey, just over forty percent considered they were well prepared to teach *reading* and about sixty per cent felt well prepared to teach *mathematics.*

Housego (1990b) found that both primary and secondary student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach increased significantly during the first term of both the new and the old teacher education programmes that she studied in Canada. At the end of the first term, however, new programme student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach were significantly greater than those of old programme student teachers at a comparable point in their programme. At this point, new programme student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach were at a level comparable to that reached by old programme students near the end of their teacher education programme. Housego (1992) when assessing student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach during the first offering of a primary teacher education programme in the University of British Columbia (1987-1989) found that total group feelings of preparedness to teach increased significantly in every term except the last, but increases did not occur for all subgroups.

The Balance of the Teacher Education Course

When asked to rank the components of the B.Ed.(Hons) course in order of importance the Maltese Student Teachers ranked *Teaching Practice*, *Philosophy of Education* and their *Main Subject Specialisation* as the three most important components of the course. For the First Year Teachers these were *Teaching Practice*, the *Dissertation* and *Sociology of Education.* The More Experienced Teachers considered *Psychology of Education*, *Teaching Practice* and *Philosophy of Education* as the three most important components.

In the HMI study (1988) the probationers gave their views on the balance of their courses, the training being divided into five strands: education studies, teaching method, classroom observation, teaching practice and the study of specialist academic subjects. Only the views of teachers trained by routes other than the PGCE were included, since PGCE students normally complete their specialist academic studies before undertaking professional development. Over half the new teachers considered that appropriate emphasis had been placed on the main strands of their courses. However, in the case of education studies, 44 per cent believed too much emphasis had been given. About 40 per cent considered that teaching method, classroom observation and teaching practice had received too little emphasis. Overall, over half the teachers considered that a satisfactory balance had been achieved between professional training and academic subject study.

The beginning teachers studied by Miklos & Greene (1987) in Alberta, Canada viewed programmes as having more potential to develop knowledge and understanding than skills. Preparation programmes were rated as most effective in the areas in which teachers considered them to have the highest potential; however, these areas were not highly important to teachers in their daily work. Practicums were judged to be the most significant component of teacher preparation. The significance attached to other education components was related directly to the degree to which they were judged to be practical.

Newton & Brathwaite (1987) found that teachers and faculty on University of the West Indies teacher education courses considered interpersonal, curriculum and evaluative

skills to be the most important. The high importance of interpersonal skills applied only to interactions with students. Interactions with other teachers and parents was consistently lowest in importance. Low priorities were managerial and methodological skills. Few significant differences were found between teachers and teaching staff on the teacher education courses. In general programme effectiveness showed strong positive correlation with order of importance of skills. High involvement of faculty in classroom activity is considered a possible factor influencing these results.

Boulianne and Weston (1987) surveyed 204 secondary teachers in Ecuador to examine the discrepancy between their Perceived Preparation and their perceptions of the importance of various topics covered by their teacher education. The list of 46 items included in the questionnaire were divided in three sections: 1) *Instructional Process*, 2) *Foundations* and 3) *Other Professional Attitudes and Activities*. The majority of the items considered most important were from the *Instructional Process* category. On the other hand, of the items for which the teachers felt they had received better preparation, only a few were from this category. The most serious problem in their preparation, as perceived by these teachers, was in the *Instructional Process* category. This did not imply that all was well necessarily in the other two areas, but that the most serious problem was perceived to be in the preparation of those specific teaching skills essential to the practitioners, such as instructional methods and techniques of evaluation. The earlier studies by Weston (1982) and Boulianne (1983) revealed gaps in the relationship between preparation and practice for other groups of teachers.

A word of caution is in place here. When comparing findings from different countries it must be borne in mind that teachers' professional perspectives and their practice will be strongly influenced by the ideological traditions and prevailing policy directives of the national education system within which they work (Osborn & Broadfoot, 1993). Similar terms may not have conceptual equivalence, that is the concepts under study may not have the same meaning in the different countries being studied. Nevertheless it may be concluded from the above-mentioned studies that beginning teachers value opportunities for professional experience in the actual classroom situation.

Validation of the Student Teachers' views of the teacher education course

The views of the teacher educators about the effectiveness of the course were contrasted with the views of the final year student teachers themselves. Differences or similarities between the perceptions of the course of the two groups were identified. The 28 Teacher Educators, who make up the lecturing complement of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta, were surveyed about their perceptions of the levels of preparation afforded to students by the B.Ed. (Hons) degree course. The Teacher Educators were asked to rate the various skills related to the teacher training course. These were compared to the Student Teachers' ratings.

On the whole there is correspondence between the Teacher Educators and the Student Teachers about the level of preparation afforded by the course. To a certain extent, the perceptions of the Teacher Educators, who have considerable experience in teacher education, validate the Student Teachers' perceptions of their training course. The Student Teachers tend to rate their preparation in the classroom-specific items significantly higher than the Teacher Educators.

8.3 Perceived Competence of Intending and Beginning Teachers

This part of the study was concerned with the extent to which the students and beginning teachers feel that they are competent in teaching. Again the data were analysed for the three cohorts to explore how perceptions of competence are affected by increasing experience of teaching.

The same groupings of items are evident on the Perceived Competence Questionnaire as with the Perceived Preparation Questionnaire. The First Year Teachers feel more competent in the general professional skills and the subject-specific items when compared to the Student Teachers. Their first year in post seems to lead the First Year Teachers to feel more competent than the Student Teachers in these areas, but not in the classroom-specific items. The level of Perceived Competence of the First Year Teachers is in turn greater than that of the More Experienced Teachers. The Student

Teachers feel most competent in the classroom-specific items when compared to the beginning teachers. With increasing years of experience the More Experienced Teachers tend to feel somewhat disillusioned and less sure of their competence when compared to the First Year Teachers. It may be that their increasing experience affords them a deeper understanding of the job such that their standards for their own competence rise.

Two substantial factors emerged from the factor analysis of all the responses on Perceived Competence. Factor 1 appears to represent a teacher's sense of competence in teaching the various subject areas and to a lesser degree in more general classroom skills. The items within the category of more general professional skills of the Perceived Competence Questionnaire receive a low factor loading on this factor. On the whole these are areas which require skills which extend beyond what a teacher training course can offer. They involve highly specific skills which can only be attained with increasing experience in schools over an extended period of time. The centralised schooling system and the lack of availability of support staff (clerks, technicians, etc.) in the schools means that the Maltese teacher is presented with a multitude of administrative duties. The very limited supply of counsellors in schools and members of staff who have special responsibilities for pastoral care and special needs imposes upon the regular Maltese class teacher a plethora of pastoral responsibilities for which the beginning teacher feels unprepared. This is frequently particularly overwhelming for beginning teachers who have no training or experience in these aspects. Factor 2 appears to represent a teacher's sense of competence in more general classroom skills and lack of competence in the subject specific areas. The subject specific areas load negatively on this factor.

The groupings of: classroom-specific items, subject-specific items and more general professional skills as identified in the preceding sections on Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence were borne out by the factor analysis.

External validations of the First Year Teachers' self-ratings of their teaching competence.

It was necessary to validate the self-ratings of the beginning teachers by comparing their ratings on competence to the ratings of their competence as evaluated by external judges. The 23 Education Officers of the Department of Education in Malta were provided with a rating schedule that contained the same items as the sections dealing with self-estimates of competence in teaching in the questionnaires for intending and beginning teachers. The Education Officers' ratings were compared to the First Year Teachers' Self-Rating on Competence. There was no opportunity for the Education Officers to observe the competence of the First Year Teachers on the subject-specific items as the majority of First Year Teachers (80%) were teaching at secondary level.

There is an overall correspondence between the Education Officers' ratings on competence and the First Year Teachers' Self-Ratings on competence. On about half of the items there is correspondence between the Education Officers' ratings on competence and the First Year Teachers' Self-Ratings on competence, in that there are no significant differences between their respective scores on these items. Both groups rank more highly competence in the more general professional skills.

It was important to establish not simply the general trend of ratings given by the two groups, but the agreement between them when rating the same person's skills. The Education Officers' ratings of the First Year Teachers were compared on each item with that same teacher's rating of his/her competence. The relationship between the items as rated by the Education Officers and the self-ratings of First Year Teachers is stronger for those items on which there is more agreement on what constitutes good practice (the classroom-specific items). The items for which a poor relationship is registered are those items on which there is less agreement in this context as to what constitutes good practice (general professional items).

In the HMI investigation (1988) in the U.K., after visiting the new teachers, the Inspectors rated about fifty-five per cent of the 297 new teachers as displaying a high or relatively high degree of competence in the skills which they might have been expected to acquire through training. A third of all the teachers were rated as showing a

moderate level of competence. However, about twenty per cent of the new teachers were rated as lacking some or many basic teaching skills.

8.4 The Curve of Disenchantment

This study has sought to investigate the notion of the 'curve of disenchantment' by examining the Perceived Preparation and the Perceived Competence of the three cohorts; Student Teachers, teachers in their first teaching post and teachers with two to four years of teaching experience. The 'curve of disenchantment' affects both Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence across various aspects of a teacher's skills (refer to sections 2.4-2.12). Although lacking longitudinal evidence, the homogeneity and uniformity of experience of these three cohorts have made possible comparisons between these cohorts in terms of the item groupings of: Classroom-Specific items, More General Professional items and Subject-Specific items.

Perceived Preparation is quite similar across the three groups for the Classroom-Specific Items. However, for both the More General Professional items and the Subject-specific items the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves higher on preparation. There is little here to suggest a curve of disenchantment, if by that is meant a marked decrease in confidence for First Year Teachers. If any 'dip' in confidence occurs at all throughout their first year of regular teaching, it is evidently recovered towards the end of the year for these beginning teachers as suggested by Vonk (1982, 1983).

The Perceived Competence of the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers is lower than that of the Student Teachers for the Classroom- Specific items only. However, the level of Perceived Competence for the Subject-Specific Items and the More General Professional Items of the First Year Teachers is higher than that of the Student Teachers. Thus any decrease only relates to the classroom-specific skills, not to all areas of competence.

If the curve of disenchantment is an effect produced by the harsh reality of the classroom experience, then it should produce a differential effect in terms of subject-

specific items across the primary and secondary cohorts. The secondary group do not teach the full range of subjects covered by their training and included in the survey instruments; they become specialist subject teachers. For the primary cohorts the Perceived Preparation for the More General Professional Items of the First Year Teachers is higher than that of the Student Teachers. It is, however, slightly lower for the More Experienced Teachers. The Perceived Preparation of the other two item groupings is fairly stable for the three cohorts. In terms of Perceived Competence the First Year Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves lower on competence than the Student Teachers. However, the former two groups rate themselves higher on competence for the More General Professional Items.

For the secondary cohorts the First Year Teachers rate themselves higher on preparation for the Subject-Specific Items and the More General Professional Items. The scores for the Subject-specific items increase slightly for the More Experienced Teachers and the scores for the More General Professional items decrease slightly for this cohort. Perceived Preparation for the Classroom-Specific Items tends to decrease slightly across the three groups. In terms of Perceived Competence the First Year Teachers rate themselves higher on competence for the Subject-Specific Items and the More General professional Items when compared to the Student Teachers. There is a slight decrease in level of Perceived Competence for both item groupings in the case of the More Experienced Teachers. The Perceived Competence for the Classroom-Specific items decreases across the three cohorts.

Comparisons between the primary and secondary cohorts for Perceived Preparation suggests that is indeed the subject-specific items which show a difference between the two groups, remaining higher for the secondary cohort for the First Year Teachers. On Perceived Competence, this group of items for secondary teachers shows a marked increase in scores for First Year Teachers, while primary teachers show what may be regarded as a curve of disenchantment. This evidence for the curve of disenchantment can be found for areas of skills which are tested by the harsh reality of professional experience; more general professional skills seem to resist the effect of disenchantment, while the negative effects of early experiences seem to exert a stronger effect on the new teachers' perceptions of competence in classroom- and subject-specific areas. This confirms the HMI (1988) survey where there were substantial differences between secondary teachers and those in primary and middle schools with regard to their

mastery of the subjects they were teaching. Secondary teachers were usually teaching their specialist subjects, whereas primary teachers had to cover a wide ranging curriculum which often included areas which they had not studied in depth during their training.

8.5 Relations between Ratings on Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence

The differences and relationship between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence were investigated for each cohort in order to identify in which areas of the course the student or beginning teachers felt themselves to be more prepared than competent and vice-versa. The extent to which the ratings in preparation to teach are correlated with the ratings in competence in teaching was examined. This investigation was carried out for each cohort and for the Primary and Secondary sub-groups within each cohort.

The inclusion of the various homogeneous cohorts in this study made possible the examination of the changing patterns of Perceived Preparation and competence with the shift from training to full-time teaching and with increased teaching experience. Comparisons across cohorts enable us to determine what fluctuations in Perceived Preparation and competence occur in the various teacher education curricular areas with increased teaching experience.

The Student Teachers

On the whole the Student Teachers felt significantly more competent than prepared. It seems that the Student Teachers felt that in terms of the majority of the items their perceived high competence did not derive entirely from their preparation.

The Student Teachers feel most prepared and competent in the classroom-specific items and least prepared and competent in the more general professional items. The Student

Teachers feel that their preparation on the subject-specific and classroom-specific items is a better predictor of their competence in these areas than is the case for the more general professional skills. On the whole there were no significant differences between Primary and Secondary Student Teachers in both Perceived Preparation and competence. This was to be expected as none of these groups had had substantial enactive experience, in terms of extended classroom teaching.

The First Year Teachers

The First Year Teachers feel more prepared than competent on the classroom-specific items and the more professional general skills. However, on some of the subject-specific items they feel more competent than prepared. They feel most prepared on the more general professional skills and least prepared on the classroom-specific skills. However, they feel most competent in the subject-specific items and least competent in the classroom-specific items.

In terms of Perceived Preparation the order of the items is practically reversed for First Year Teachers when compared to that of the Student Teachers. There is also a much weaker correspondence between Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence within this group when compared to the Student Teachers. Again as with the Student Teachers, the stronger correlations are registered for most of the subject-specific and classroom-specific items. The more general professional items register lower correlations. On all the subject-specific items and most of the classroom-specific items the First Year Teachers registered a lower correlation between the perceived levels of preparation and competence than the Student Teachers.

It seems that the First Year Teachers, who are well into their first year of teaching, are more sceptical about the relationship between preparation and their competence on all the subject-specific and most of the classroom-specific items than the Student Teachers. However, the First Year Teachers appreciate more than the Student Teachers the relationship between their course of preparation and their eventual competence on the other items.

The different teaching experiences afforded to the intending and beginning teachers by teaching in a primary or secondary school made possible an investigation of the difference on the ratings of the two sub-groups. This revealed that in the case of the First Year Teachers, few significant differences in Perceived Preparation were identified between these two groups. These were in the main for subject-specific items, where the Primary teachers rated themselves lower on preparation than the Secondary First Year Teachers. In the case of competence, too, the Primary Teachers rated themselves considerably lower than the Secondary teachers in the case of all the subject-specific items. Their first year experience leads the Primary First Year Teachers to feel substantially less confident than the Secondary in their competence to teach the subject-specific items after having had the opportunity to teach these for a year. The Secondary First Year Teachers show considerably more confidence than their Primary counterparts in the teaching of the subject-specific items, which they have had no opportunity to teach. In the case of the other items, the classroom-specific ones and the more general professional ones their confidence in their competence is quite similar. The different group responses of the primary and secondary sub-groups provide further evidence for the validity of the questionnaire in that the items and groupings of items behave independently.

The More Experienced Teachers

On almost all the items the More Experienced Teachers rate themselves higher on preparation than on competence. These teachers felt significantly less competent than prepared. The More Experienced Teachers felt most prepared in the more general professional skills and least prepared in the classroom-specific items. They felt most competent in the subject-specific items and least competent in the classroom-specific and more general professional items.

Again, as with the Student Teachers, a moderately high relationship between self-estimates of preparation and competence was established for the subject-specific items for the More Experienced Teachers. An average relationship was obtained for the more classroom specific skills. A low relationship between self-estimates in preparation to teach and competence in teaching was registered for the more general professional items

which are considered to require skills and qualities, extraneous to what can be obtained strictly from the teacher education course. *Administrative Duties, Pastoral Duties, Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils, Teaching Pupils with Special Needs* and *Liaison with Parents* seem to involve skills which require qualities like empathy and require a substantial amount of on-the-job training with experienced colleagues.

When compared to the First Year Teachers, the More Experienced Teachers registered a higher correlation between the perceived levels of preparation and competence for the subject-specific skills. For these More Experienced Teachers, who have from two to four years of teaching experience, the relationship between their perceived levels of preparation and competence are closer to those of the Student Teachers than they are to those of the First Year Teachers.

An investigation of the primary and secondary sub-groups revealed that in the case of the More Experienced Teachers no significant differences resulted between the two groups for the classroom-specific items and the more general professional ones. Their Perceived Preparation and their confidence in their competence are quite similar. However, significant differences were identified between these two groups for the subject-specific items on both preparation and competence. On all the subject-specific items the Primary More Experienced Teachers rated themselves significantly lower than their Secondary counterparts. As with the cohort of Primary First Year Teachers the increased experience of the Primary More Experienced Teachers leads them to feel substantially less well prepared and less competent than their Secondary counterparts in the teaching of the subject-specific items after having had the opportunity to teach these for a few years. The Secondary More Experienced Teachers feel considerably more prepared and competent than their Primary counterparts in the teaching of the subject-specific items, which the Secondary teachers have had no opportunity to teach. However the competence of the Secondary More Experienced Teachers in these items is not as high as that rated by the Secondary First Year Teachers. It seems that their increased experience has led them to temper their ratings in this regard.

8.6 The Relationship between Perceived Competence and Teaching Performance

Classroom observation data in this study suggests, within the limitations of the present study, that different patterns of Perceived Competence may be related to certain patterns of classroom behaviour shown in research to yield achievement gains. In the present study primary teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence engaged in more non-academic time. Stallings and Hentzell (1979) found that the use of games and other non-academic materials was more frequently observed in less effective teachers' classrooms. Teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence were also less likely to persist with a child who gave an incorrect answer, but more likely to provide criticism of an incorrect answer and to go on by giving the answer, asking another pupil, or allowing another pupil to call out before a pupil gave the correct answer. It appears that although teachers with both a high and low level of Perceived Competence did provide pupils further opportunities to correct their answers (persistence), those teachers with a high level of Perceived Competence were more effective in leading pupils to correct answers through their questions. Teachers with a low level of Perceived Competence would go on to other pupils or another question (lack of persistence) before the pupil arrived at the correct answer. Those teachers who have confidence in their ability to teach may communicate higher expectations by providing less criticism to pupils and persisting with pupils until they respond correctly rather than going on to another pupil or another question. However, the direction of causality could be in the opposite direction - using these (more effective) teaching strategies may lead teachers to feel more competent.

These Maltese findings correspond to those of Gibson & Dembo (1984) whose work in the U.S. suggests that more general expectations such as those inherent within the construct of teacher efficacy may influence feedback behaviours and teacher persistence. They suggest that teachers who in general expect students to learn and who have confidence in their ability to teach may communicate higher expectations by providing less criticism to students and persisting with students until they respond correctly rather than going on to another student or another question.

8.7 Implications and Recommendations

Two broad areas for the implications and recommendations of this research are to be dealt with, namely for further research and for the support of beginning teachers' professional development.

8.7.1 Implications and Recommendations for Further Research

These findings suggest that perceptions of preparation and competence may vary in distinctly different ways. This makes possible the comparative study of the development of teachers' subjective perceptions of preparation and competence with groups of:

i) novices of different teacher education backgrounds in similar school contexts. This would allow an investigation of the effects on teachers' subjective perceptions of different teacher education programmes.
ii) the same group of novices with same teacher education background and similar school contexts to be investigated over the years. This would allow an investigation of how subjective perceptions change over an extended period of teaching experience.

Further, it is feasible with suitable modifications to devise similar research instruments for the more refined investigation into the nature of changes in the subjective perceptions of professionals brought about by promotion or by the transition from apprenticeship to actual practice. Although the research conducted here was specifically concerned with the study of intending and beginning teachers, it could be further extended to describe the transition of novice teachers into expert teachers. This would necessitate a much longer time-span.

The relationship between level of Perceived Competence and teacher task persistence could be expanded beyond analysis of teacher feedback responses. Other task persistence measures, such as use of mastery teaching techniques and requests that

pupils make corrections, could be explored. Any subsequent investigations of the relationship between level of Perceived Competence and observable classroom process variables should include a study of the direction of effect of these factors, perhaps in an intervention study. As it is, it is not clear as to what extent the teachers' level of competence determines their classroom behaviour and to what extent these behaviours reinforce the teachers' level of Perceived Competence. Further studies need to consider also measures of student engagement rates or on-task behaviours. Teacher behaviour variables that can increase student engagement rates should be explored such as how feedback is provided to pupils who are working independently and physical proximity of teacher to students.

Trends revealed in the classroom study suggest that more general expectations such as those inherent within the construct of teacher efficacy may influence feedback behaviours and teacher persistence. Those teachers who have confidence in their ability to teach may communicate higher expectations by providing less criticism to students and persisting with students until they respond correctly rather than going on to another student or another question. Caution must be taken in reaching any conclusion regarding the classroom behaviours of teachers with a high or low level of Perceived Competence, until larger samples of teachers are studied.

Enactive sources, in terms of their increased experience, as defined by Bandura (1981) may lead the beginning teachers to feel more prepared in the general professional skills and less prepared in the classroom-specific skills when compared to the Student Teachers. Retrospective assessments of how well a course of training prepared students for their task change over time and with classroom experience. A number of research issues should be addressed in future investigations. First, further elements of Bandura's theory of self-efficacy should be explored as they relate to teacher efficacy. For example, Bandura speaks of dimensions of generality, magnitude and strength of self-efficacy. When applied to teachers, it may be that generality relates to the extent to which a teacher feels efficacious in a variety of teaching situations rather than a narrowly defined range of situations. Magnitude may be reflected in the degree of difficulty of the task for which a teacher feels efficacious, and strength may be manifest in the relative ease or difficulty with which it may be modified.

Another dimension for further investigation is one which is derived from attribution theory, in that people often explain their actions by factors that lie within or outside their control. The attributions of teachers for their Perceived Competence may be classified in a number of ways (for example, see Weiner, 1979).

Further study of the relationship between level of Perceived Competence and teacher decision making, particularly in the area of classroom organisation and management, is needed. Perhaps decisions such as on student groupings are based on the sense of confidence a teacher feels in achieving instructional goals, being able to manage the behaviour of students, or being in control of the instructional setting. Intervention and/or modification of teacher decision making in these areas would be more effective if we had a clearer understanding of a teacher's underlying motivational structure.

Action Research

Carr and Kemmis (1986) attempt to show that one concrete way in which teachers can become critically engaged in their practice is by using the methods and procedures of action research. It needs to be stressed however, that the way in which action research is now being used with teachers often displays many positivist elements. In particular, much educational action research employs technical interpretations of the concepts of 'self-reflection' and 'critique' which completely fail to appreciate their central meaning and importance for reconstructing action research as a form of critical educational science.

Carr sees the need to reconstruct teacher education in terms of the concepts and language of praxis. In many cases, at present, within teacher education theorising is something that is done in isolation from practice and which then has to be 'implemented in' or 'applied' to practice. Similarly, educational practice is treated as some kind of non-theorised performance to which theory can somehow be attached. One of the aims of Carr's work is to support an approach to teacher education that treats theory and practice as dialectically related so that each informs, and is informed by, the other. In such an approach, teachers would theorise on their practice by reflecting critically on their understanding of their practice and the circumstances in which these practices are embedded. Similarly they would practise in ways that were informed by their general

educational values and theoretical principles. In this kind of teacher education, theorising and practising would not be two separate activities but mutually constitutive elements in a continuous dialectical reconstruction of thought and action.

Another implication concerns the conception of professionalism that should inform teacher education. In many teacher education programmes it is assumed that the professionalism of teachers derives from their expertise and skill in applying theoretical knowledge to the everyday problems of teaching. Carr argues, however, that teachers' professionalism derives from the fact that they 'profess' educational values and practice under a professional obligation to promote these values in their work. If teacher professionalism is understood in this way, teacher education would necessarily portray teaching as a practical art of translating abstract educational values into concrete educational practice. It would unavoidably be concerned with helping teachers to confront the numerous non-educational pressures and non-professional constraints that undermine their work as professional educators.

Within the Maltese context, the introduction of the M.Ed. degree by the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta in recent years has provided a small number of teachers and educational administrators the opportunity to engage in action research as part fulfilment of their degree requirements. It is hoped that this and similar opportunities will, in the future, be made use of by a larger number of teachers as it is only in the classroom laboratory that processes of effective learning and teaching are best tried and tested. Action research would also provide teachers, especially those in the beginning years of their professional career with a valuable opportunity to reflect upon their preparation and practice, to draw upon the best available educational research and to develop teaching strategies best suited for the Maltese educational context.

McIntyre (1988) points out that research on the transition from training to practice must be sensitive to differences amongst individuals and contexts. This sensitivity can be better observed through detailed case studies of student and beginning teachers. These can highlight both areas of success and areas of disappointment and instances of confused and inconsistent messages. For example, Eisenhart, Behm & Romagnano (1991) in a case study of one course in the USA, highlighted the ways in which the university, the schools and the student teachers seemed to be competing to establish their own agendas and the inconsistencies within each of these groups. Also studies

should not simply look at the teaching expertise developed, but must try to judge different programmes in terms of their own aims and context. This point has been made by Hawk & Schmidt (1989) and Zumwalt (1991) in their studies of alternative training routes to becoming a teacher in the USA.

A substantial number of untrained (casual) teachers are recruited every year within the Maltese educational system to cope with the shortage of trained teachers. Also graduates with a master's or doctoral degree may enter teaching without training. A comparative investigation of the socialisation of untrained non-graduates, untrained graduates and trained graduates may shed light on the specific expertise imparted by teacher training courses. Cooke & Pang (1991) who studied 129 'trained', 'partially trained' and 'untrained' beginning teachers in Hong Kong, noted that the trained beginning teachers appeared to have fewer problems and adjusted better during the first year of teaching than did the other two groups.

8.7.2 Implications and Recommendations for the Support of Professional Development

It has been suggested that new teachers become less idealistic in being socialised, harmonising their expectations with those of practitioners. The findings of this study and previous investigations of feelings of preparedness to teach (Housego, 1990a, 1990b & 1992) seem to underscore the importance to student and beginning teachers of the analysis of effective teaching, the choice and sequencing of course content and the provision of field experiences which address the development of specific teaching skills.

Feelings of preparedness to teach and competence in teaching require more attention in teacher education. Student and beginning teachers' sense of personal teaching efficacy is an important outcome of their preparation and feelings of competence. In the classroom system of reciprocal determinism, personal teaching efficacy affects the teacher's behaviour, the pupil's behaviour, and the environment in which they both work (Housego, 1990b).

A teacher education programme, if it is to have a desirable impact on its clientele, needs a positive, supportive ethos such as has been shown to influence the achievement of students in primary and secondary schools (Rutter *et al.*, 1979; Mortimore *et al.*, 1988). This need is perceived by the Student Teachers themselves:

> 'More co-operation between lecturers and students is called for. Many students feel abandoned by the Faculty itself. Pastoral care of students should start from the Faculty of Education itself.'
>
> (Final year male student teacher)

Kilgore, Ross & Zbikowski (1990) asked six elementary school teachers in their first year of teaching in the USA to describe a problem they had encountered and their attempted solutions. They reported that the teachers who exhibited more mature reflection worked in schools with supportive colleagues who valued teacher decision making and gave the teachers more autonomy to experiment with their instructional strategies.

Under such conditions, perhaps, student teachers' confidence in professional preparation and their own competence could be strengthened. This study indicates also that for Maltese beginning teachers the priority of immediate concerns may be somewhat different from that of beginning teachers in other countries. Above all, they feel that their professional endeavours are shackled by a lack of resources in the schools.

The new perspective of changes over time in Perceived Preparation and Competence makes it possible not only to identify the changing perceptions but to establish variations between the constructs of Perceived Preparation and Competence in terms of amount of teaching experience. More appropriate assistance can then be offered to beginning teachers. This signals a need for teacher education institutions to recognise what they can offer to intending teachers in their pre-service education and what is better served by the implementation of effective induction programmes in the first year or so of their career. It is not sufficient to leave it to the students and the beginning teachers to establish the link between theory and practice. Russell (1988) looked at teachers' conception of the relationship between theory and practice. In a study in Canada, which included case studies of two student teachers and two first year

teachers, he concluded that both the student teachers and the first year teachers found the issue of how theory and practice are related to each other was problematic. Russell argues that support for first year teachers often assumes that the theory-practice tension, commonly experienced by student teachers, is no longer a problem, and as such, an important opportunity to contribute to the development of the beginning teacher may be passed by. Many of the student and beginning teachers studied here recognised the gap between theory and practice, as exemplified in comments like:

> 'More practicality and lecturers who can give practical ideas and not merely theory. There is a great gap between theory and practice.'
>
> (Final year female student teacher)

> 'Why do students regard educational philosophy and sociology as having nothing to do with the real situation in schools. I would put less emphasis on the educational theory and instead put more emphasis on experience and practice. I think 'practical' should be the word, as during lectures, we hear a lot of theory but sometimes, when we face the classrooms, it is a lot different.'
>
> (First year male secondary teacher)

Some are more willing to acknowledge the difficulties that the theory/practice divide offers and feel that there is not much more that the Maltese course can do in this regard:

> 'Despite all the faults of the (BEd[Hons])course, I feel that I was well prepared for my career. Some say that the course has nothing to do with real-life teaching, but I believe that a gap between theory and practice exists for all the (University) courses. It is up to the individual to use the theory accordingly. The (BEd[Hons]) degree course does give a good overall preparation. A teacher needs much more than just a deep knowledge of her subject.'
>
> (First year female secondary teacher)

They must be helped to do this through the teacher education course, the induction phase and continuous professional development throughout the teaching career:

'The BEd(Hons) course provided a good basis for my teaching career, however I feel that the course has to be supplemented by in-service courses along the years.'

(First year female secondary teacher)

Preparation for certain aspects of the teacher's role is more readily achieved in the school than at the teacher education institution:

'It would be better, in my opinion, to post students with a number of good teachers, who are willing to help the Student Teachers and are in some form of agreement with the Faculty.'

(Final year male student teacher)

'Teaching of methodology should be tied with teaching sessions conducted in schools during the period in which the unit is delivered.'

(Final year female student teacher)

This applies particularly to the general professional items; administrative and pastoral duties, liaison with parents and the teaching of pupils with special needs and socially deprived pupils. It is important that schools make available opportunities for students on teaching practice and the new teachers in their first posts to obtain experience of these aspects of the teacher's job in a guided manner.

Since the first years of teaching are so vital it is surprising to find that in Malta no provision is made for the induction of beginning teachers. The beginning teachers studied here receive minimal support. Much closer and more frequent contacts between the teacher education institution and the employers are required in the transitional period from training to practice:

'I felt ridiculous during the (recruitment) INTERVIEW *(respondent's capital letters)* at the Department of Education where some people were trying to quiz me about whether I had the necessary prerequisites to become a teacher.'

(First year female primary teacher)

> 'More co-ordination between the Faculty and the Department of Education is called for, so that Student Teachers have a better work climate in schools.'
>
> (Male final year student teacher)

A supporting system, headed by senior staff members in schools, who would be responsible for the novices' professional development is needed. In Malta, much counselling work is planned for pupils and students in general. However, there is no provision for teachers, especially novices. This would allow the new teachers, through a system of personal profiling, to recognise in which areas they require further training, assistance and support. Leigh (1990) has reported on current developments in Britain, where it appears that some courses which have adopted a profiling scheme see this as a means of encouraging formative assessment, while others see its purpose as summative assessment.

In order to be able to provide appropriate support for new teachers, the schools require from the teacher education institution detailed information about the strengths and weaknesses of the intending teacher during the course. This would help to bridge the gap between the pre-service teacher education and employment. The HMI study (1988, p.10) identifies that:

> 'More attention needs to be given to defining the levels of competence in different professional skills which may reasonably be expected of teachers at the conclusion of their training. These levels of competence need to be understood and accepted by those responsible both for training and induction.'

The HMI survey revealed a lack of clarity and agreement about what intending teachers in general might reasonably be expected to know and be capable of doing by the end of their pre-service teacher education courses and what was to be provided by the induction programmes. A recognition of the limitations of what pre-service teacher education can accomplish and how induction can complement it is necessary. The HMI survey (1988, p.10) recognises that: 'Some aspects of training cannot be developed in depth until the probationer is in post'.

The strong case made by Gammage (1992) for primary teacher training to take cognisance of the entering characteristics of the learners could also be applied to those who are responsible for the initial education of teachers and their continuous professional development. Calderhead & Robson (1991), in a constructivist approach to teacher education, question whether training courses take sufficient account of student teachers' initial images of teaching in order to challenge misconceptions and develop their expertise.

Time and opportunity for reflection is part of the crucial process of achieving professional expertise in teaching. This is recognised by the beginning teachers:

> '....reflection on what kind of an educator one is becoming is neglected. It takes time to reflect upon what becoming an educator really means. Knowing your 'mains'(main subject specialisation) is quite important but learning how to go about it is much more difficult once one decides to 'adopt' a particular philosophy and to 'internalise' it. Therefore time is needed to be able to discover, adopt or adapt particular systems which would enhance one's feelings and ideas of what being an educator means.'
>
> (First year female secondary teacher)

Some studies have looked at how helping student teachers to reflect on their own approaches to learning can enable them to reflect more critically on how to teach effectively. Sikes & Troyna (1991) used a 'life history' method in which 34 student teachers in Britain were involved in interviewing each other about their educational experiences as pupils. These included recollections of their best and worst experiences of schooling. They concluded that encouraging student teachers to explore their own educational life histories can have a very useful impact on their understanding of the way they think and act as teachers and thereby can help them to more critically assess and develop their expertise. Another study which utilised student teachers' reflection of how they learn was reported by Simmons & Wild (1992). They found that this approach encouraged the student teachers to adopt a 'deep approach' to this learning task and helped them appreciate the features of different types of learning activities and how these features contributed to their effectiveness.

It is advisable to allow novices 'personal psychological space' to evaluate their professional preparation and competence, with a supporting system which affords them the opportunity to enhance their self-esteem. Such a supporting system would allow novices to boost their self-efficacy from enactive sources (based on performance achievements), vicarious sources (based on verbal advice by peers and senior colleagues), and emotive sources (based on physiological arousal from the professional satisfaction and security afforded by such a supporting system).

Gammage (1992) noted that:

> '...any system of training is only the beginning of a career in which constant up-dating and refreshment is essential if the shelf-life of the teacher is to be preserved; continuous professional development, not the demeaning term 'inset', should be employed to signal the entitlement of teachers to that constant professional and reflective up-dating.' (p.1)

To grow professionally in teaching, reflection on the processes of professional preparation and competence is of utmost importance. It remains to be seen through further research how this reflection can be promoted in beginning teachers in the turbulent early stages of their careers. One favourable aspect of the Maltese scene is that as exemplified by the vignettes presented in Appendix VI, all in all the Maltese beginning teachers report positive attitudes towards teaching. Within the context of the findings of this research study, which indicate that the majority of Maltese beginning teachers report that they are well satisfied with their career, that they intend to continue with teaching as a career and if given the opportunity they would take up teaching all over again, the prospects for Malta in this regard are very positive and augur well for the future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I Data from Pilot Tests of Questionnaires

Appendix II Questionnaires and Rating Schedule for Survey

Appendix III Covering Letters for Questionnaires

Appendix IV Cross Tabulations for Correlations of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for each cohort

Appendix V Data for Factor Analysis

Appendix VI Detailed Description of Primary Schooling in Malta and the Classroom Practice of the Nine Teachers Studied

Appendix VII Coding Schedules for the Classroom Study:
i) Teachers' Use of Time
ii) Teachers' Feedback Patterns

Appendix I Data from Pilot Tests of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Questionnaires

Table A1 Data from Pilot Test of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Questionnaires with Student Teachers

		Student Teachers* (n=25)				
	Preparation					
		Very Well Prepared	Well Prepared	Moderately Prepared	Fairly Well Prepared	Not Prepared at all
Items						
1	Language in Learning	2	4	6	7	6
2	Questioning techniques	3	8	5	2	6
3	Programme Planning	4	5	6	8	2
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2	6	3	5	9
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	1	9	6	3	6
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	0	6	5	6	8
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	5	2	8	2	8
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	1	9	8	4	3
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	2	8	2	8	5
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	3	6	4	7	5
11	Administrative Duties	2	7	8	5	3
12	Pastoral Duties	0	4	6	5	10
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	2	6	6	2	9
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	2	3	10	3	7
15	Equal Opportunities	2	2	6	7	8
16	Liaison with Parents	0	8	10	2	5
17	Maltese Reading	2	2	5	10	6
18	English Reading	5	5	8	0	7
19	Maltese Creative Writing	3	4	2	6	10
20	English Creative Writing	2	5	9	5	4
21	Mathematics	3	8	4	5	5
22	Religious Education	0	3	6	11	5
23	Social Studies	4	6	7	6	2
24	Environmental Studies	3	2	5	5	10
25	Art and Craft	2	7	6	7	3
26	Physical Education	5	6	6	6	2
	Competence					
		Very Competent	Quite Competent	Moderately Competent	Fairly Competent	Incompetent
1	Language in Learning	4	3	10	2	6
2	Questioning techniques	5	2	4	9	5
3	Programme Planning	4	1	6	8	6
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	3	0	5	6	11
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	4	7	2	7	5
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	1	4	8	7	5
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	2	4	6	8	6
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	6	5	2	6	6
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	4	2	7	6	6
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	8	3	2	6	5
11	Administrative Duties	5	4	8	2	6
12	Pastoral Duties	6	2	5	9	3
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	3	1	9	6	6
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	6	0	6	8	5
15	Equal Opportunities	2	5	2	8	8
16	Liaison with Parents	4	1	9	3	8
17	Maltese Reading	8	2	8	5	2
18	English Reading	7	3	6	5	4
19	Maltese Creative Writing	5	2	7	3	8
20	English Creative Writing	4	0	5	10	6
21	Mathematics	6	2	2	9	6
22	Religious Education	4	3	3	6	9
23	Social Studies	3	1	4	11	6
24	Environmental Studies	7	1	2	5	10
25	Art and Craft	2	4	10	5	4
26	Physical Education	5	5	0	7	8
*Third Year Student Teachers						

Table A2 Data from Pilot Test of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Questionnaires with Beginning Teachers

		More Experienced Teachers* (n=25)				
	Preparation					
		Very Well Prepared	Well Prepared	Moderately Prepared	Fairly Well Prepared	Not Prepared at all
Items						
1	Language in Learning	7	2	3	6	7
2	Questioning techniques	6	5	2	6	6
3	Programme Planning	4	2	7	6	6
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2	6	3	5	9
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	6	3	1	9	6
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	5	6	0	6	8
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	8	2	5	2	8
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	8	4	1	9	3
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	2	8	2	8	5
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	4	7	3	6	5
11	Administrative Duties	2	4	6	7	6
12	Pastoral Duties	3	8	5	2	7
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	4	5	6	8	2
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	3	4	9	3	6
15	Equal Opportunities	1	3	6	4	11
16	Liaison with Parents	0	8	10	2	5
17	Maltese Reading	3	3	4	10	5
18	English Reading	8	3	2	6	6
19	Maltese Creative Writing	5	4	8	2	6
20	English Creative Writing	6	2	5	9	3
21	Mathematics	1	4	8	6	6
22	Religious Education	5	0	6	11	3
23	Social Studies	6	4	2	7	6
24	Environmental Studies	2	3	10	5	5
25	Art and Craft	7	2	3	6	7
26	Physical Education	6	5	2	6	6
	Competence					
		Very Competent	Quite Competent	Moderately Competent	Fairly Competent	incompetent
1	Language in Learning	0	6	5	6	8
2	Questioning techniques	5	2	8	2	8
3	Programme Planning	1	4	8	9	3
4	Assessment of Pupils' Progress	2	8	2	8	5
5	Effectiveness of own teaching	6	4	2	7	6
6	Teaching Mixed Ability Pupils	2	3	10	5	5
7	Teaching Average Ability Pupils	7	2	3	6	7
8	Teaching Less Able Pupils	5	6	6	6	2
9	Teaching More Able Pupils	4	2	7	6	6
10	Teaching Socially Deprived Pupils	2	6	3	5	9
11	Administrative Duties	5	4	8	2	6
12	Pastoral Duties	6	2	5	9	3
13	Use of Audio-Visual Equipment	3	1	9	6	6
14	Teaching Pupils with Special Needs	1	3	6	9	6
15	Equal Opportunities	0	6	5	6	8
16	Liaison with Parents	5	2	8	2	8
17	Maltese Reading	3	2	5	10	5
18	English Reading	2	7	5	6	5
19	Maltese Creative Writing	5	6	3	9	2
20	English Creative Writing	5	1	7	8	4
21	Mathematics	6	2	5	6	6
22	Religious Education	4	3	6	6	6
23	Social Studies	3	1	7	8	6
24	Environmental Studies	8	0	5	5	7
25	Art and Craft	3	3	7	8	4
26	Physical Education	4	4	5	6	6
	*Teachers with five years of teaching experience.					

Appendix II Questionnaires and Rating Schedule for Survey

A) Student Teacher Questionnaire (incorporating Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Questionnaires)

B) Beginning Teacher Questionnaire (incorporating Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Questionnaires)

C) Teacher Educator Questionnaire

D) Education Officer Questionnaire

Appendix IIA) Student Teacher Questionnaire (incorporating Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Questionnaires)

A

STUDENT TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

(Fill in or mark with a cross X where applicable)

1. AGE: [ ] years

2. SEX: [Female] [Male]

3. What are your :

Teaching Area I (Mains) [ ]

Teaching Area II (Subsidiary) [ ]

4. Which age groups did you teach during your TEACHING PRACTICE SESSIONS?

Indicate where applicable whether the classes were: Low-ability, Mixed-ability or High-ability.
(Please insert also the subjects taught at secondary level)

	YEAR OR FORMS	PRIMARY	Secondary or Trade Schools	Mixed Ability	Low Ability	Average Ability	High Ability
FIRST YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
SECOND YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
THIRD YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
FOURTH YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA

5. Which of the following people have given you help during your latest teaching practice?
Rank the first three: 1, 2, 3 (1 being the one who has proved to be most helpful.)
Then put a cross X against those who gave you no help.

Nobody	
University Tutor	
Headteacher	
Assistant Head(s)	
Senior Teacher	
Other Teacher(s)	
Education Officer	
Someone else (please specify)	

.....

6. Please indicate the extent to which the items listed below have caused problems in your latest teaching practice:
(Mark with a cross X where applicable)

no problems	some problems	major problems	not applicable	
NP	SP	MP	NA	1. Teaching subjects for which your training has not equipped you.
NP	SP	MP	NA	2. Amount of marking required.
NP	SP	MP	NA	3. Lesson preparation.
NP	SP	MP	NA	4. Difficulty in controlling individual pupils.
NP	SP	MP	NA	5. Difficulty in controlling class.
NP	SP	MP	NA	6. The administrative tasks associated with teaching.
NP	SP	MP	NA	7. Inadequate school textbooks.
NP	SP	MP	NA	8. Inadequate audio visual resources.
NP	SP	MP	NA	9. Lack of clear direction from established staff.

Others (please specify)

NP	SP	MP	NA	10.
NP	SP	MP	NA	11.
NP	SP	MP	NA	12.

Perceived Preparation Questionnaire

7. As a result of your B.Ed.(Hons) training, how well prepared do you feel you have been: (Mark with a cross X where applicable)

very well prepared	well prepared	moderately prepared	fairly well prepared	not prepared at all	
VW	W	M	FW	N	1. to understand the importance of language in learning.
VW	W	M	FW	N	2. to use appropriately a variety of questioning techniques.
VW	W	M	FW	N	3. to plan a programme of work over a period of time.
VW	W	M	FW	N	4. to assess your pupils' progress.
VW	W	M	FW	N	5. to assess the effectiveness of your own teaching.
VW	W	M	FW	N	6. to teach mixed ability groups.
VW	W	M	FW	N	7. to teach average ability children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	10. to teach less able children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	11. to teach more able children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	12. to teach socially deprived children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	13. for administrative duties.
VW	W	M	FW	N	14. to undertake pastoral duties (welfare of the children).
VW	W	M	FW	N	15. in the use of audio-visual equipment.
VW	W	M	FW	N	16. to teach children with special needs in the ordinary classroom.
VW	W	M	FW	N	17. to promote equal opportunities for boys and girls.
VW	W	M	FW	N	18. to liaise with parents.

Additional comments:

very well prepared	well prepared	moderately prepared	fairly well prepared	not prepared at all	
VW	W	MW	FW	N	1. to teach Maltese reading.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	2. to teach English reading.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	3. to teach Maltese creative writing.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	4. to teach English creative writing.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	5. to teach Mathematics.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	6. to teach Religious Education.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	7. to teach Social Studies.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	8. to teach Environmental Studies.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	9. to teach Art and Craft.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	10. to teach Physical Education.

Perceived Competence Questionnaire

8. IN ACTUAL FACT how competent do you feel you are:
(Mark with a cross X where applicable)

very competent	quite competent	moderately competent	fairly competent	incompetent	
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	1. to understand the importance of language in learning.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	2. to use appropriately a variety of questioning techniques.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	3. to plan a programme of work over a period of time.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	4. to assess your pupils' progress.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	5. to assess the effectiveness of your own teaching.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	6. to teach mixed ability groups.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	7. to teach average ability children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	10. to teach less able children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	11. to teach more able children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	12. to teach socially deprived children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	13. for administrative duties.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	14. to undertake pastoral duties (welfare of the children).
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	15. in the use of audio-visual equipment.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	16. to teach children with special needs in the ordinary classroom.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	17. to promote equal opportunities for boys and girls.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	18. to liaise with parents.

Additional comments:

very competent	quite competent	moderately competent	fairly competent	incompetent	
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	1. to teach Maltese reading.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	2. to teach English reading.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	3. to teach Maltese creative writing.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	4. to teach English creative writing.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	5. to teach Mathematics.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	6. to teach Religious Education.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	7. to teach Social Studies.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	8. to teach Environmental Studies.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	9. to teach Art and Craft.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	10. to teach Physical Education.

BALANCE OF THE TRAINING COURSE

9. Reviewing your course at the university do you think the course put:
(Mark with a cross X where applicable)

too much emphasis	a lot of emphasis	moderate emphasis	fair amount of emphasis	little emphasis	
TM	L	M	F	L	1. on psychology of education.
TM	L	M	F	L	2. on philosophy of education.
TM	L	M	F	L	3. on sociology of education.
TM	L	M	F	L	4. on history of education.
TM	L	M	F	L	5. on teaching methodology.
TM	L	M	F	L	6. on studying main subject.
TM	L	M	F	L	7. on classroom observation during 'Introduction to School Experience'.
TM	L	M	F	L	8. on micro-teaching.
TM	L	M	F	L	9. on teaching practice.
TM	L	M	F	L	10. on the dissertation.

Additional comments:

10. How satisfied are you with your choice of teaching as a career? (tick one)

Very Well Satisfied	☐
Well Satisfied	☐
Moderately Satisfied	☐
Fairly Satisfied	☐
Not Satisfied at all	☐

11. Which one of the following statements best describes how you feel about a career in teaching? (tick one)

I have definitely decided to make teaching my career	☐
I have definitely decided to teach, at least for a few years	☐
I have not yet decided whether I shall continue to teach	☐
I do not intend to teach in the next year or two but I hope to return to teaching later in my career	☐
I do not intend to teach again once this year is over	☐

12. How likely is it that you would choose teaching again as a career if if you were to start your studies over again? (tick one)

Very Likely	☐
Fairly Likely	☐
Unlikely	☐

16. One of the features of the Maltese B.Ed.(Hons) degree is that holders are eligible to teach at both Primary and Secondary level. In your opinion what would be the best?: (tick one)

a B.Ed.(Hons) degree which trains students for both Primary and Secondary levels	☐
two separate B.Ed.(Hons) degrees; one for Primary and another for Secondary	☐

13. Were you to be advising fellow students WHO WERE QUITE CERTAIN that they intended to make a career in SECONDARY TEACHING to which course would you direct them?: (tick one)

B.Ed.(Hons) degree ☐

Other degree and P.G.C.E. ☐

14. Please give any further views and suggestions for the improvement of the course: (Please use the space provided below)

Teaching Practice:

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Teaching of Main Subjects:.

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Teaching of Methodology:

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Pastoral Care of Students:

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Overall :

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

Appendix IIB) Beginning Teacher Questionnaire (incorporating Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence Questionnaires)

B

BEGINNING TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

(Fill in or mark with a cross X where appropriate)

1. **AGE:** ☐ **years**

2. **SEX:** ☐ **Female** ☐ **Male**

3. **When at university what was your year group?**
   (tick the appropriate year)

1987–91	☐
1986–91	☐
1985–90	☐
1984–89	☐
1983–88	☐
Other year group (please specify)	☐

4. **When at university what were your:**

Teaching Area I (Mains)	☐
Teaching area II (Subsidiary)	☐

5. **If you have moved out of teaching, kindly specify your present occupation:**

.....

6. Which age groups did you teach during your TEACHING PRACTICE SESSIONS?

Indicate where applicable whether the classes were: Low-ability, Mixed-ability or High-ability.
(Please insert also the subjects taught at secondary level)

	YEAR OR FORMS	PRIMARY	Secondary or Trade Schools	Mixed Ability	Low Ability	Average Ability	High Ability
FIRST YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
SECOND YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
THIRD YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
FOURTH YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA

7. What type of school are you now teaching in? | State | | Private |

8. If you are not a regular teacher but you have a job within the educational field kindly specify what your job is:

.....

9. Which classes have you taught throughout these last five years of teaching after graduation?
(Fill in or mark with a cross X where applicable)
Please insert also the subjects taught at secondary level.

	YEAR OR FORMS	PRIMARY	Secondary or Trade Schools	Mixed Ability	Low Ability	Average Ability	High Ability
FIRST YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
SECOND YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
THIRD YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
FOURTH YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA
FIFTH YEAR		P	S	MA	LA	AA	HA

10. Do you have any other duties in the school besides teaching your class?

YES	NO

If YES what are they? .....

Are these on an official basis, i.e. do you receive an allowance for them?

YES	NO

11. Which of the following people have given you some help during your first years of TEACHING?
Rank the first three: 1, 2, 3 for each year (1 being the one who has proved to be most helpful.)
Then put a cross H against those who gave you no help.
Fill in only where applicable to your case.

	first year	second year	third year	fourth year	fifth year
Nobody					
Headteacher					
Assistant Head(s)					
Senior teacher					
Other Teacher(s)					
Education Officer					
Someone else (please specify)					

Perceived Preparation Questionnaire

12. THINKING BACK TO YOUR B.Ed.(Hons) TRAINING, how well prepared do you feel you were : (Mark with across X where applicable)

very well prepared	well prepared	moderately prepared	fairly well prepared	not prepared at all	
VW	W	M	FW	N	1. to understand the importance of language in learning.
VW	W	M	FW	N	2. to use appropriately a variety of questioning techniques.
VW	W	M	FW	N	3. to plan a programme of work over a period of time.
VW	W	M	FW	N	4. to assess your pupils' progress.
VW	W	M	FW	N	5. to assess the effectiveness of your own teaching.
VW	W	M	FW	N	6. to teach mixed ability groups.
VW	W	M	FW	N	7. to teach average ability children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	10. to teach less able children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	11. to teach more able children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	12. to teach socially deprived children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	13. for administrative duties.
VW	W	M	FW	N	14. to undertake pastoral duties (welfare of the children).
VW	W	M	FW	N	15. in the use of audio-visual equipment.
VW	W	M	FW	N	16. to teach children with special needs in the ordinary classroom.
VW	W	M	FW	N	17. to promote equal opportunities for boys and girls.
VW	W	M	FW	N	18. to liaise with parents.

Additional comments:

very well prepared	well prepared	moderately prepared	fairly well prepared	not prepared at all	
VW	W	MW	FW	N	1. to teach Maltese reading.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	2. to teach English reading.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	3. to teach Maltese creative writing.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	4. to teach English creative writing.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	5. to teach Mathematics.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	6. to teach Religious Education.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	7. to teach Social Studies.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	8. to teach Environmental Studies.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	9. to teach Art and Craft.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	10. to teach Physical Education.

Perceived Competence Questionnaire

13. Taking into account the teaching experience you have had since graduation, how competent do you feel you are now in the following areas:
(Mark with a cross X where applicable)

very competent	quite competent	moderately competent	fairly competent	incompetent	
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	1. to understand the importance of language in learning.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	2. to use appropriately a variety of questioning techniques.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	3. to plan a programme of work over a period of time.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	4. to assess your pupils' progress.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	5. to assess the effectiveness of your own teaching.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	6. to teach mixed ability groups.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	7. to teach average ability children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	10. to teach less able children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	11. to teach more able children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	12. to teach socially deprived children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	13. for administrative duties.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	14. to undertake pastoral duties (welfare of the children).
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	15. in the use of audio-visual equipment.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	16. to teach children with special needs in the ordinary classroom.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	17. to promote equal opportunities for boys and girls.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	18. to liaise with parents.

Additional comments:

very competent	quite competent	moderately competent	fairly competent	incompetent	
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	1. to teach Maltese reading.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	2. to teach English reading.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	3. to teach Maltese creative writing.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	4. to teach English creative writing.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	5. to teach Mathematics.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	6. to teach Religious Education.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	7. to teach Social Studies.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	8. to teach Environmental Studies.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	9. to teach Art and Craft.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	10. to teach Physical Education.

Balance of the teacher education course

14. Please rank in order of importance

	Psychology of Education
	Philosophy of Education
	Sociology of Education
	History of Education
	Teaching Methodology
	Main Subject Specialisation
	Classroom Observation
	Micro-Teaching
	Teaching Practice
	Dissertation

Additional comments:

15 . How satisfied are you with your teaching job? (tick one)

Very Well Satisfied	☐
Well Satisfied	☐
Moderately Satisfied	☐
Fairly Satisfied	☐
Not Satisfied at all	☐

16. Which one of the following statements best describes how you feel about a career in teaching? (tick one)

I have definitely decided to make teaching my career	☐
I have definitely decided to teach, at least for a few years	☐
I have not yet decided whether I shall continue to teach	☐
I do not intend to teach in the next year or two but I hope to return to teaching later in my career	☐
I do not intend to teach again once this year is over	☐

17 . How likely is it that you would choose teaching again as a career if if you were to start your studies over again? (tick one)

Very Likely	☐
Fairly Likely	☐
Unlikely	☐

19. Please give any further views and suggestions for the improvement of the course: (Please use the space provided below)

Teaching Practice:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Teaching of Main Subjects:

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.....

Teaching of Methodology:

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.....

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Pastoral Care of Students:

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Overall :

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

Appendix IIC) Teacher Educator Questionnaire

C

TEACHER EDUCATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Basing yourself on your knowledge of the B.Ed.(Hons) course and on your experience of monitoring students on the latest Teaching Practice sessions , how well prepared do you think our students are: (Mark with a cross X where applicable)

very well prepared	well prepared	moderately prepared	fairly well prepared	not prepared at all	
VW	W	M	FW	N	1. to understand the importance of language in learning.
VW	W	M	FW	N	2. to use appropriately a variety of questioning techniques.
VW	W	M	FW	N	3. to plan a programme of work over a period of time.
VW	W	M	FW	N	4. to assess their pupils' progress.
VW	W	M	FW	N	5. to assess the effectiveness of their own teaching.
VW	W	M	FW	N	6. to teach mixed ability groups.
VW	W	M	FW	N	7. to teach average ability children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	10. to teach less able children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	11. to teach more able children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	12. to teach socially deprived children.
VW	W	M	FW	N	13. for administrative duties.
VW	W	M	FW	N	14. to undertake pastoral duties (welfare of the children).
VW	W	M	FW	N	15. in the use of audio-visual equipment.
VW	W	M	FW	N	16. to teach children with special needs in the ordinary classroom.
VW	W	M	FW	N	17. to promote equal opportunities for boys and girls.
VW	W	M	FW	N	18. to liaise with parents.

Additional comments:

very well prepared	well prepared	moderately prepared	fairly well prepared	not prepared at all	
VW	W	MW	FW	N	1. to teach Maltese reading.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	2. to teach English reading.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	3. to teach Maltese creative writing.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	4. to teach English creative writing.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	5. to teach Mathematics.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	6. to teach Religious Education.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	7. to teach Social Studies.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	8. to teach Environmental Studies.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	9. to teach Art and Craft.
VW	W	MW	FW	N	10. to teach Physical Education.

Appendix IID) Education Officer Rating Schedule

D

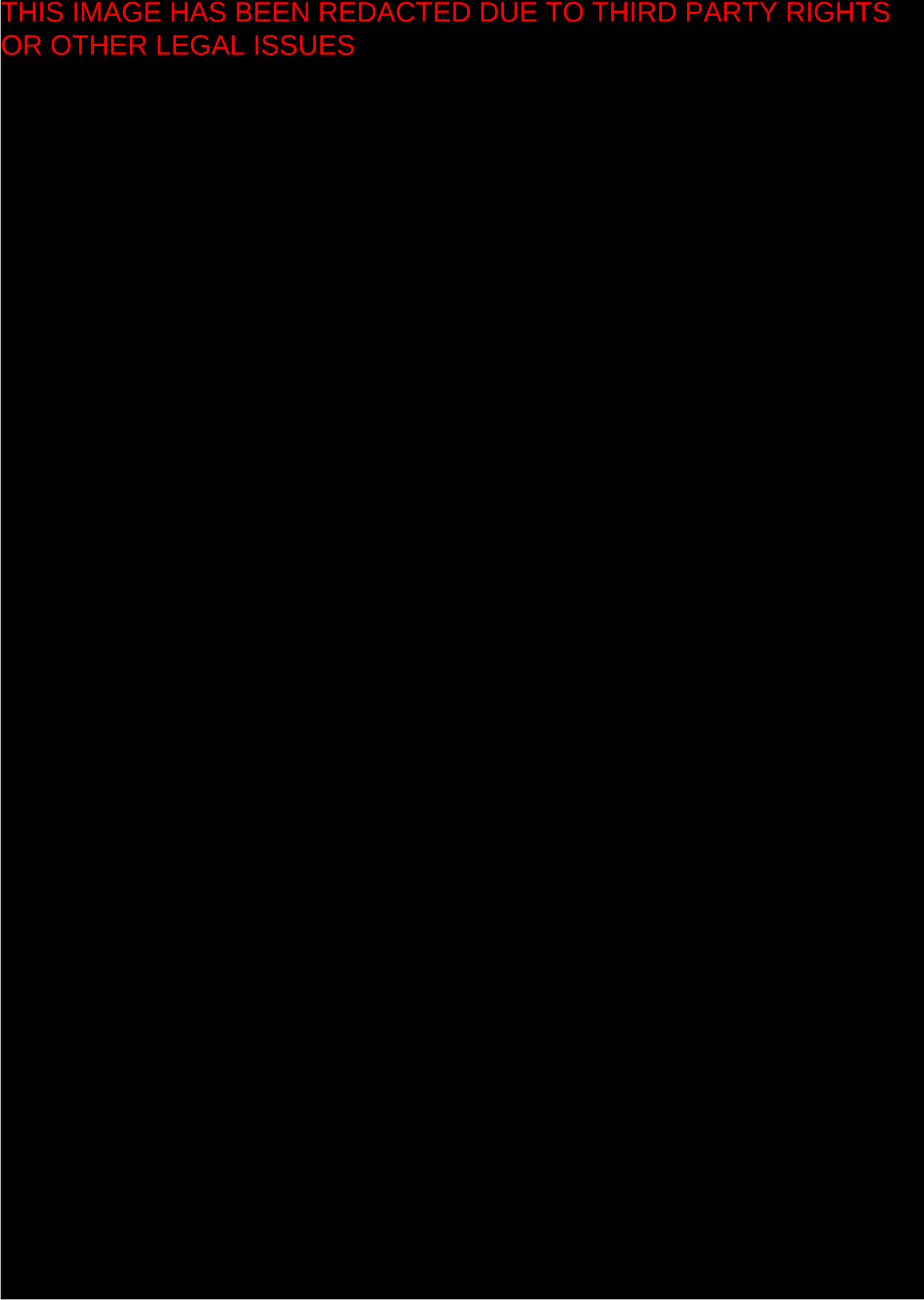
EDUCATION OFFICERS' RATING SCHEDULE

1) KINDLY COMPLETE A RATING SCHEDULE FOR EACH TEACHER THAT HAS COMPLETED THEIR B.ED.(Hons) training last year and that you have been monitoring this year, basing yourself on a recent lesson that you have observed:
(Mark with a cross X where appropriate)

very competent	quite competent	moderately competent	fairly competent	incompetent	
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	1. to understand the importance of language in learning.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	2. to use appropriately a variety of questioning techniques.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	3. to plan a programme of work over a period of time.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	4. to assess your pupils' progress.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	5. to assess the effectiveness of your own teaching.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	6. to teach mixed ability groups.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	7. to teach average ability children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	10. to teach less able children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	11. to teach more able children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	12. to teach socially deprived children.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	13. for administrative duties.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	14. to undertake pastoral duties (welfare of the children).
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	15. in the use of audio-visual equipment.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	16. to teach children with special needs in the ordinary classroom.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	17. to promote equal opportunities for boys and girls.
VC	QC	MC	FC	I	18. to liaise with parents.

Additional comments:

Appendix III Covering Letters for Questionnaires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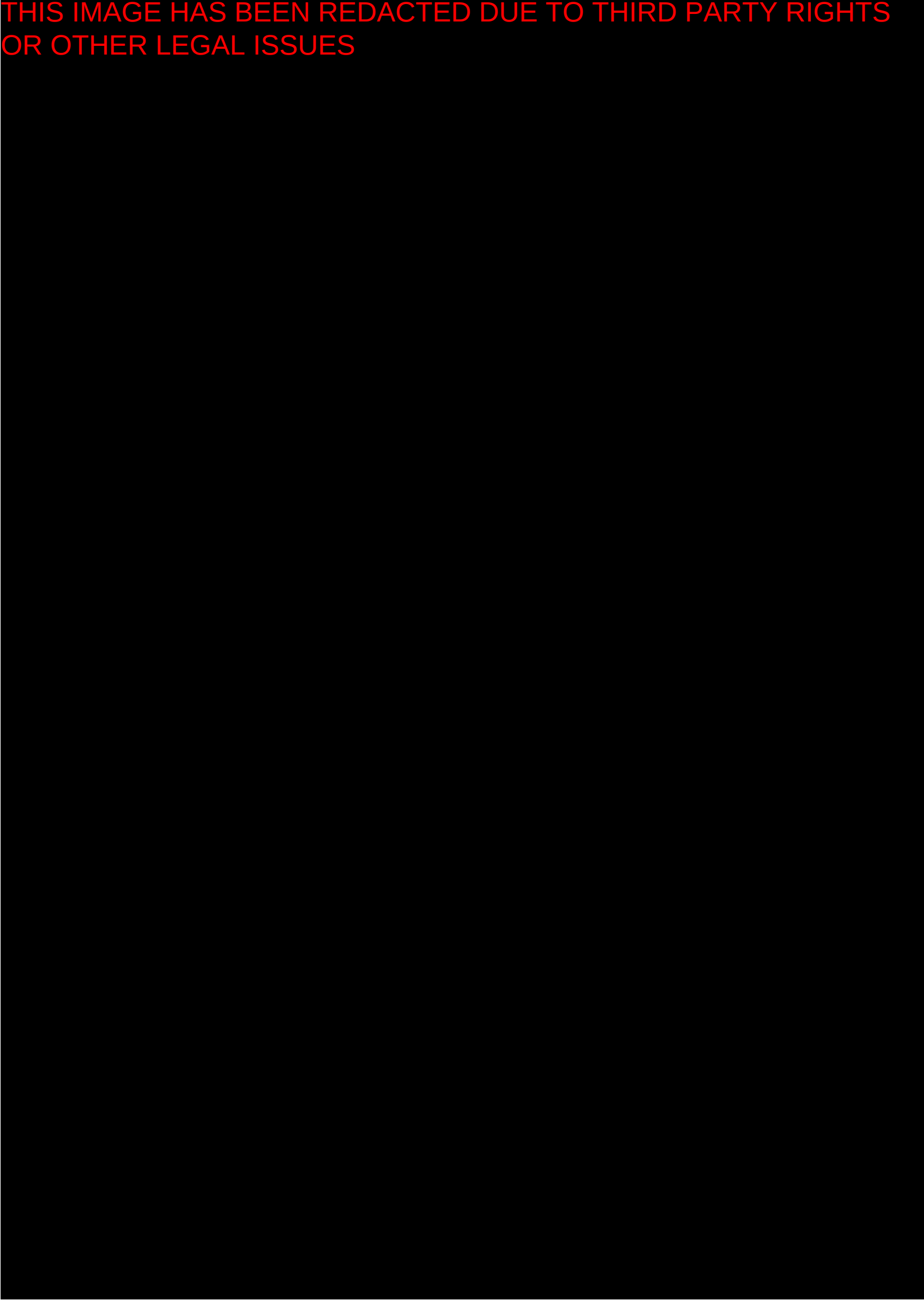
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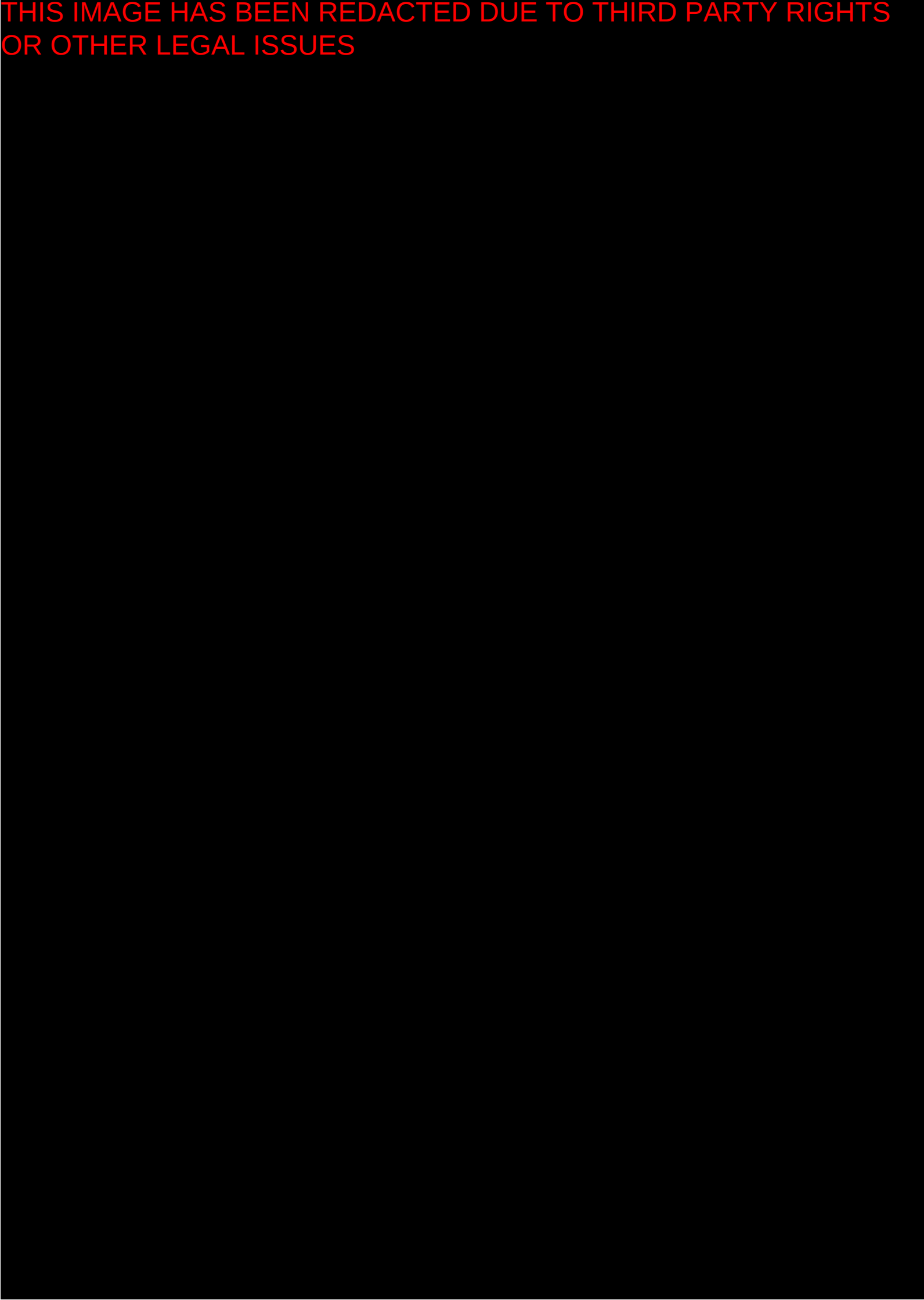
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Appendix IV Cross Tabulations for Correlations of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for each cohort

A) Cross Tabulations for Correlations of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for Student Teachers

B) Cross Tabulations for Correlations of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for First Year Teachers

C) Cross Tabulations for Correlations of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for More Experienced Teachers

Appendix IV A) Cross Tabulations for Correlations of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for Student Teachers

PREP1 Language in learning by TC1 language in learning

PREP1	Count	TC1 2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	2				2 2.8
	2	9	7	4		20 27.8
	3	2	12	9		23 31.9
	4		7	13	1	21 29.2
PREP1	5			4	2	6 8.3
	Column Total	13 18.1	26 36.1	30 41.7	3 4.2	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.54977	.07484	6.59627	

PREP2 questioning techniques by TC2 questioning techniques

PREP2 Count	TC2 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
2	3	5	4			12 16.7
3			8	7		15 20.8
4		1	6	25	5	37 51.4
5				1	7	8 11.1
Column Total	3 4.2	6 8.3	18 25.0	33 45.8	12 16.7	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.69414	.06050	8.51893	

PREP3 plan a programme by TC3 plan a programme

PREP3	Count	TC3 2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	1	1			2 2.8
	2	6	4	5		15 20.8
	3	3	9	3	1	16 22.2
	4	1	4	13	4	22 30.6
PREP3	5			11	6	17 23.6
	Column Total	11 15.3	18 25.0	32 44.4	11 15.3	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.54362	.06308	7.94640	

PREP4 pupils' progress by TC4 assess pupils' progress

PREP4 \ TC4	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	2	5	4			11 15.3
2	2	2	14			18 25.0
3		3	5	3	6	17 23.6
4			2	13	2	17 23.6
5			1	7	1	9 12.5
Column Total	4 5.6	10 13.9	26 36.1	23 31.9	9 12.5	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.56260	.05592	10.01517	

PREP5 effectiveness of own teaching by TC5 effectiveness of own teaching

PREP5	Count	TC5 2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1		1			1 1.4
	2	4	6	2		12 16.7
	3	2	12	6	1	21 29.2
	4		1	17	10	28 38.9
PREP5	5			6	4	10 13.9
	Column Total	6 8.3	20 27.8	31 43.1	15 20.8	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.61146	.05320	10.16591	

PREP6 mixed ability by TC6 mixed ability

PREP6	Count	TC6 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1			8	4			12 16.7
2		2	13	11	4		30 41.7
3			6	11	3	1	21 29.2
4				5	4		9 12.5
Column Total		2 2.8	27 37.5	31 43.1	11 15.3	1 1.4	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.36897	.07697	4.56117	

PREP7 average ability by TC7 average ability

PREP7	Count	TC7 2	3	4	5	Row Total
1		2	1			3 4.2
2		3	11	2		16 22.2
3		5	5	10	1	21 29.2
4			7	21	2	30 41.7
5				2		2 2.8
Column Total		10 13.9	24 33.3	35 48.6	3 4.2	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.48177	.06807	6.63285	

PREP8 Less able by TC8 less able

PREP8	Count	TC8 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP8	1	3	7	4			14 19.4
	2	6	13	8	8		35 48.6
	3			5	9	1	15 20.8
	4			1	5		6 8.3
	5				2		2 2.8
	Column Total	9 12.5	20 27.8	18 25.0	24 33.3	1 1.4	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.52868	.05352	8.65194	

PREP9 more able by TC9 more able

PREP9	Count	TC9 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP9	1	4		2	3		9 12.5
	2		3	11	2		16 22.2
	3	2		2	13	4	21 29.2
	4			5	9	2	16 22.2
	5		2	1	2	5	10 13.9
	Column Total	6 8.3	5 6.9	21 29.2	29 40.3	11 15.3	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.38593	.09716	3.89454	

PREP10 socially deprived by TC10 socially deprived

PREP10 Count	TC10 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	12	19	8	1	1	41 56.9
2	5	6	9	4		24 33.3
3		3		2		5 6.9
5			2			2 2.8
Column Total	17 23.6	28 38.9	19 26.4	7 9.7	1 1.4	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.27607	.09379	2.87590	

PREP11 administrative duties by TC11 administrative duties

PREP11	Count	TC11 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	17	14	10	8	1	50 69.4
	2	1	4	4	4	1	14 19.4
	3		4	2	1		7 9.7
	4				1		1 1.4
	Column Total	18 25.0	22 30.6	16 22.2	14 19.4	2 2.8	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.23420	.08774	2.59702	

PREP12 pastoral duties by TC12 pastoral duties

PREP12	Count	TC12 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP12	1	14	12	11	8	1	46 63.9
	2	5	2	2	2	1	12 16.7
	3	2	1	3	1	1	8 11.1
	4				5		5 6.9
PREP12	5					1	1 1.4
	Column Total	21 29.2	15 20.8	16 22.2	16 22.2	4 5.6	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.22066	.10306	2.06400	

PREP13 audio-visual equipment by TC13 audio-visual equipment

PREP13	Count	TC13 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP13	1	2	5	1			8 11.1
	2	6	5	6	9		26 36.1
	3		1	7	12	3	23 31.9
	4		2	3	3	3	11 15.3
PREP13	5				1	3	4 5.6
	Column Total	8 11.1	13 18.1	17 23.6	25 34.7	9 12.5	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.48371	.07427	6.07425	

PREP14 special needs by TC14 special needs

PREP14	Count	TC14 1	2	3	4	Row Total
	1	11	11	3	1	26 36.1
	2	4	15	8	3	30 41.7
	3	1	7	3	3	14 19.4
	4			1		1 1.4
REP14	5				1	1 1.4
	Column Total	16 22.2	33 45.8	15 20.8	8 11.1	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.35639	.09192	3.74553	

PREP15 equal opportunities by TC15 equal opportunities

PREP15 \ TC15	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1		3	7	2		12 16.7
2	2	7	7	4		20 27.8
3	1		4	10		15 20.8
4			8	10	1	19 26.4
5				3	3	6 8.3
Column Total	3 4.2	10 13.9	26 36.1	29 40.3	4 5.6	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.45381	.07068	6.01321	

PREP16 liaise with parents by TC16 liaise with parents

PREP16 / REP16	Count	TC16 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP16	1	6	12	5	8	1	32 44.4
	2		2	12	7		21 29.2
	3		2	8	6	1	17 23.6
	4				1		1 1.4
REP16	5				1		1 1.4
	Column Total	6 8.3	16 22.2	25 34.7	23 31.9	2 2.8	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.32535	.09969	3.19954	

PP1 Maltese reading by TCP1 Maltese reading

PP1 \ TCP1	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	16	7	3	2		28 38.9
2		5	5	1		11 15.3
3		3	11	1		15 20.8
4			4	6	4	14 19.4
5				2	2	4 5.6
Column Total	16 22.2	15 20.8	23 31.9	12 16.7	6 8.3	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.69640	.05951	10.87514	

PP2 English reading by TCP2 English reading

PP2 \ TCP2	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	14	5	1	3		23 31.9
2		8	1	1	1	11 15.3
3		2	11	2		15 20.8
4			5	10	5	20 27.8
5				3		3 4.2
Column Total	14 19.4	15 20.8	18 25.0	19 26.4	6 8.3	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.67198	.06691	9.90849	

PP3 Maltese creative writing by TCP3 Maltese creative writing

PP3	Count	TCP3 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	16	10	3	2		31 43.1
	2		9	1	2	1	13 18.1
	3		2	5	4		11 15.3
	4			3	6	3	12 16.7
P3	5			1	2	2	5 6.9
	Column Total	16 22.2	21 29.2	13 18.1	16 22.2	6 8.3	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.65711	.05496	11.18580	

PP4 English creative writing by TCP4 English creative writing

PP4	Count	TCP4 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	14	7		3		24 33.3
	2		7	1	3	1	12 16.7
	3		3	6	10	2	21 29.2
	4			3	7		10 13.9
P4	5			1	3	1	5 6.9
	Column Total	14 19.4	17 23.6	11 15.3	26 36.1	4 5.6	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.58582	.06958	8.29975	

PP5 Mathematics by TCP5 Mathematics

PP5 Count	TCP5 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	11	3	5	1		20 27.8
2	2	8	4	4	1	19 26.4
3		1	8	8	2	19 26.4
4			3	2	5	10 13.9
P5 5				2	2	4 5.6
Column Total	13 18.1	12 16.7	20 27.8	17 23.6	10 13.9	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.60696	.05853	9.77061	

PP6 Religious Education by TCP6 Religious education

PP6 \ TCP6	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	17	6	3	4	1	31 43.1
2	4	8	3	6		21 29.2
3			4	3		7 9.7
4			5	6		11 15.3
5				2		2 2.8
Column Total	21 29.2	14 19.4	15 20.8	21 29.2	1 1.4	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.48269	.08040	5.88458	

PP7 Social Studies by TCP7 Social Studies

PP7 \ TCP7 Count	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	13	6	4	3	1	27 37.5
2	3	6	4	1		14 19.4
3			12	5		17 23.6
4			2	7		9 12.5
5				1	4	5 6.9
Column Total	16 22.2	12 16.7	22 30.6	17 23.6	5 6.9	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.61103	.07823	7.33649	

PP8 environmental studies by TCP8 Environmental studies

PP8	Count	TCP8 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP8	1	9	3		3	1	16 22.2
	2		6	3			9 12.5
	3		2	14	4		20 27.8
	4			9	13		22 30.6
PP8	5				2	3	5 6.9
	Column Total	9 12.5	11 15.3	26 36.1	22 30.6	4 5.6	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.61889	.09057	6.42746	

PP9 art and craft by TCP9 Art and Craft

PP9 \ TCP9 Count	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	18	2	3	1		24 33.3
2	2	6	4	1		13 18.1
3		7	8	1		16 22.2
4		2	5	7	3	17 23.6
5			1	1		2 2.8
Column Total	20 27.8	17 23.6	21 29.2	11 15.3	3 4.2	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.63579	.06887	9.22204	

PP10 physical education by TCP10 Physical Education

PP10	Count	TCP10 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP10	1	12	7	6	3		28 38.9
	2		6	4	1		11 15.3
	3	2	2	8	9		21 29.2
	4		2	2	4	2	10 13.9
	5				1	1	2 2.8
	Column Total	14 19.4	17 23.6	20 27.8	18 25.0	3 4.2	72 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.49633	.08329	5.76076	

Appendix IV B) Cross Tabulations for Correlations of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for First Year Teachers

PREP1 Language in learning by TC1 language in learning

Count	TC1 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP1 1	7	2	1			10 7.4
2	8	32	3	1	2	46 34.1
3	7	26	12	2	2	49 36.3
4		3	13	5		21 15.6
REP1 5			1	2	6	9 6.7
Column Total	22 16.3	63 46.7	30 22.2	10 7.4	10 7.4	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.52418	.06116	7.74731	

PREP2 questioning techniques by TC2 questioning techniques

PREP2 / Count	TC2 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	14	10	1			25 / 18.5
2	10	26	10	1	1	48 / 35.6
3	1	18	8	6		33 / 24.4
4	2	4	6	12		24 / 17.8
REP2 5				1	4	5 / 3.7
Column Total	27 / 20.0	58 / 43.0	25 / 18.5	20 / 14.8	5 / 3.7	135 / 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.53907	.05777	8.55931	

PREP3 plan a programme by TC3 plan a programme

PREP3 / REP3	Count	TC3 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP3	1	22	9	2			33 24.4
	2	20	24	2	1	1	48 35.6
	3	1	14	6	2		23 17.0
	4		8	10	4		22 16.3
REP3	5		2	3	2	2	9 6.7
	Column Total	43 31.9	57 42.2	23 17.0	9 6.7	3 2.2	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.56741	.04918	10.55258	

PREP4 pupils' progress by TC4 assess pupils' progress

PREP4 Count	TC4 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	7	3	1			11
						8.1
2	5	25	10	1		41
						30.4
3	1	27	11			39
						28.9
4	3	7	15	2		27
						20.0
REP4 5		4	3	5	5	17
						12.6
Column Total	16	66	40	8	5	135
	11.9	48.9	29.6	5.9	3.7	100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.43601	.07206	5.65350	

PREP5 effectiveness of own teaching by TC5 effectiveness of own teaching

PREP5	Count	TC5 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
REP5	1	8	2	2	2		14 10.4
	2	4	28	8		1	41 30.4
	3		19	25	3		47 34.8
	4		4	10	5		19 14.1
	5		1	2	4	7	14 10.4
	Column Total	12 8.9	54 40.0	47 34.8	14 10.4	8 5.9	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.53672	.06733	7.43076	

PREP6 mixed ability by TC6 mixed ability

PREP6 \ TC6	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	4	2	1			7 5.2
2	3	4	2	2	3	14 10.4
3	1	19	14		1	35 25.9
4		12	17	7		36 26.7
5		2	12	22	7	43 31.9
Column Total	8 5.9	39 28.9	46 34.1	31 23.0	11 8.1	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.49092	.06710	7.27388	

PREP7 average ability by TC7 average ability

PREP7	Count	TC7 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1		7	3	1			11
							8.1
2		5	32	8			45
							33.3
3		3	24	11	3	5	46
							34.1
4		1	12	12	1	1	27
							20.0
REP7 5				2		4	6
							4.4
Column Total		16	71	34	4	10	135
		11.9	52.6	25.2	3.0	7.4	100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.40925	.06406	5.92111	

PREP8 Less able by TC8 less able

PREP8 Count	TC8 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	2	2			1	5 3.7
2	5	12	6	2		25 18.5
3	2	3	5	3	1	14 10.4
4	1	22	11	13	2	49 36.3
REP8 5	1	4	10	19	8	42 31.1
Column Total	11 8.1	43 31.9	32 23.7	37 27.4	12 8.9	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.40361	.06315	6.31063	

PREP9 more able by TC9 more able

PREP9 / REP9	Count	TC9 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP9	1	17	6				23 17.0
	2	12	31	2			45 33.3
	3	6	19	10	1	1	37 27.4
	4		5	5	5	4	19 14.1
REP9	5	2		1	3	5	11 8.1
	Column Total	37 27.4	61 45.2	18 13.3	9 6.7	10 7.4	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.58706	.05609	9.32574	

PREP10 socially deprived by TC10 socially deprived

PREP10	Count	TC10 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
2			3	1	1		5 3.7
3		1	9	5	3	2	20 14.8
4		2	7	11	14	3	37 27.4
5		1	5	20	20	27	73 54.1
Column Total		4 3.0	24 17.8	37 27.4	38 28.1	32 23.7	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.35925	.06531	5.33863	

PREP11 administrative duties by TC11 administrative duties

PREP11	Count	TC11 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	2					2 1.5
	2	1	1				2 1.5
	3	4	6	6	1		17 12.6
	4	1	9	9	6		25 18.5
REP11	5	2	19	23	28	17	89 65.9
	Column Total	10 7.4	35 25.9	38 28.1	35 25.9	17 12.6	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.38297	.06168	5.55071	

PREP12 pastoral duties by TC12 pastoral duties

PREP12	Count	TC12 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	2	1	5				6 4.4
	3	1	4	4	1		10 7.4
	4	1	11	14	10		36 26.7
	5	5	15	21	27	15	83 61.5
	Column Total	8 5.9	35 25.9	39 28.9	38 28.1	15 11.1	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.30442	.06626	4.37267	

PREP13 audio-visual equipment by TC13 audio-visual equipment

PREP13	Count	TC13 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	6					6 4.4
	2	4	18	4		1	27 20.0
	3	2	10	17	7	2	38 28.1
	4	2	12	15	16	3	48 35.6
REP13	5	1	5	2	5	3	16 11.9
	Column Total	15 11.1	45 33.3	38 28.1	28 20.7	9 6.7	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.37860	.07118	5.17511	

PREP14 special needs by TC14 special needs

PREP14	Count	TC14 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
2			1	1	1	3	6 4.4
3			1	5	3		9 6.7
4			1	14	26	12	53 39.3
5		1	1	9	24	32	67 49.6
Column Total		1 .7	4 3.0	29 21.5	54 40.0	47 34.8	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.26861	.07769	3.42646	

PREP15 equal opportunities by TC15 equal opportunities

PREP15 \ TC15	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	8		1			9 6.7
2	8	17	4		2	31 23.0
3	1	13	15	4	3	36 26.7
4		7	12	12	6	37 27.4
5		4	4	5	9	22 16.3
Column Total	17 12.6	41 30.4	36 26.7	21 15.6	20 14.8	135 100.0

EP15

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.53311	.05868	8.72490	

PREP16 liaise with parents by TC16 liaise with parents

PREP16	Count	TC16 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	2	6	3	1			10 7.4
	3	6	11	5			22 16.3
	4	1	10	13	7	3	34 25.2
	5	5	13	24	19	8	69 51.1
	Column Total	18 13.3	37 27.4	43 31.9	26 19.3	11 8.1	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.38560	.06455	5.63981	

PP1 Maltese reading by TCP1 Maltese reading

PP1	Count	TCP1 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1		3	2			1	6
							4.4
2		1	7	4		3	15
							11.1
3		2	7	6		13	28
							20.7
4		1		1	6	7	15
							11.1
5				1		70	71
							52.6
Column Total		7	16	12	6	94	135
		5.2	11.9	8.9	4.4	69.6	100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.64546	.05013	9.04046	

PP2 English reading by TCP2 English reading

PP2 Count	TCP2 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1		1			2	3 2.2
2		1	2		7	10 7.4
3	3	6	8	2	12	31 23.0
4	1	4		9	4	18 13.3
5			4		69	73 54.1
Column Total	4 3.0	12 8.9	14 10.4	11 8.1	94 69.6	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.45118	.06794	6.16832	

PP3 Maltese creative writing by TCP3 Maltese creative writing

PP3	Count	TCP3 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP3	1	3	5			1	9 6.7
	2	2	8		1	4	15 11.1
	3	2	3	9		12	26 19.3
	4	1	1	1	1	6	10 7.4
	5	1	1		2	71	75 55.6
	Column Total	9 6.7	18 13.3	10 7.4	4 3.0	94 69.6	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.60654	.05763	8.07372	

PP4 English creative writing by TCP4 English creative writing

PP4	Count	TCP4 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP4	1	1	1			2	4 3.0
	2		3			8	11 8.1
	3	3	3	9	1	10	26 19.3
	4	1	4	3	1	5	14 10.4
PP4	5	1		7	2	70	80 59.3
	Column Total	6 4.4	11 8.1	19 14.1	4 3.0	95 70.4	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.38362	.07294	4.88168	

PP5 Mathematics by TCP5 Mathematics

PP5	Count	TCP5 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	3	1			1	5 3.7
	2	3	9		1	7	20 14.8
	3		6	4	1	9	20 14.8
	4		1	2	1	11	15 11.1
PP5	5	2		5	3	65	75 55.6
	Column Total	8 5.9	17 12.6	11 8.1	6 4.4	93 68.9	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.47982	.07143	5.76864	

PP6 Religious Education by TCP6 Religious education

PP6 \ TCP6	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	2	2			2	6 4.4
2		1	2		1	4 3.0
3		3	5	1	10	19 14.1
4	1	5	3	4	10	23 17.0
5	4	3	4	1	71	83 61.5
Column Total	7 5.2	14 10.4	14 10.4	6 4.4	94 69.6	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.37695	.07741	4.56144	

PP7 Social Studies by TCP7 Social Studies

PP7	Count	TCP7 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP7	1	1	1				2 1.5
	2		7	1		4	12 8.9
	3	1	2	6	2	3	14 10.4
	4			4	1	8	13 9.6
	5	4	4	7	3	76	94 69.6
	Column Total	6 4.4	14 10.4	18 13.3	6 4.4	91 67.4	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.42894	.08025	4.71309	

PP8 environmental studies by TCP8 Environmental studies

PP8 \ TCP8	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1		5	1		1	7 5.2
2	1	4			10	15 11.1
3		2	9	3	8	22 16.3
4		1	2	2	5	10 7.4
5	3	3	2	3	70	81 60.0
Column Total	4 3.0	15 11.1	14 10.4	8 5.9	94 69.6	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.40285	.07828	4.75001	

PP9 art and craft by TCP9 Art and Craft

PP9	Count	TCP9 1	2	3	4	5	9	Row Total
	1	1	2			2	3	8 5.9
	2		4			10		14 10.4
	3		3	3	1	11		18 13.3
	4		2	2	7	3		14 10.4
PP9	5	3			6	72		81 60.0
	Column Total	4 3.0	11 8.1	5 3.7	14 10.4	98 72.6	3 2.2	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.24414	.09609	2.50602	

PP10 physical education by TCP10 Physical Education

PP10	Count	TCP10 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP10	1	2	1		1	3	7 5.2
	2	5	5	4		8	22 16.3
	3		3	2		7	12 8.9
	4		5	1		7	13 9.6
PP10	5	3	4		1	73	81 60.0
	Column Total	10 7.4	18 13.3	7 5.2	2 1.5	98 72.6	135 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.43404	.07258	5.35471	

Appendix IV C) Cross Tabulations for Correlations of Perceived Preparation and Perceived Competence for More Experienced Teachers

PREP1 Language in learning by TC1 language in learning

PREP1 Count	TC1 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	22	7	2			31 21.2
2	14	34	3			51 34.9
3	7	19	1	1	2	30 20.5
4		3	12	6		21 14.4
PREP1 5		3	5	5		13 8.9
Column Total	43 29.5	66 45.2	23 15.8	12 8.2	2 1.4	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.56399	.05160	9.93827	

PREP2 questioning techniques by TC2 questioning techniques

PREP2	Count	TC2 1	2	3	4	Row Total
PREP2	1	14	10	3	4	31 21.2
	2	11	30	10	3	54 37.0
	3	1	20	2	1	24 16.4
	4	2	15	14	5	36 24.7
PREP2	5			1		1 .7
	Column Total	28 19.2	75 51.4	30 20.5	13 8.9	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.28672	.07429	3.81171	

PREP3 plan a programme by TC3 plan a programme

PREP3	Count	TC3 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP3	1	30	7	5	1		43 29.5
	2	20	25	8			53 36.3
	3	11	9	8		3	31 21.2
	4	5	6	2	4		17 11.6
	5		2				2 1.4
	Column Total	66 45.2	49 33.6	23 15.8	5 3.4	3 2.1	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.27433	.07041	3.86761	

PREP4 pupils' progress by TC4 assess pupils' progress

PREP4	Count	TC4 1	2	3	4	Row Total
PREP4	1	13				13 8.9
	2	17	21	9	2	49 33.6
	3	6	34	17	3	60 41.1
	4	1	5	7	3	16 11.0
	5	3	1	4		8 5.5
	Column Total	40 27.4	61 41.8	37 25.3	8 5.5	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.38439	.07049	5.31527	

PREP5 effectiveness of own teaching by TC5 effectiveness of own teaching

PREP5	Count	TC5 1	2	3	4	Row Total
PREP5	1	11	2			13 8.9
	2	6	37	7		50 34.2
	3	2	27	12	2	43 29.5
	4	2	13	11	5	31 21.2
PREP5	5			5	4	9 6.2
	Column Total	21 14.4	79 54.1	35 24.0	11 7.5	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.50866	.05923	7.63779	

PREP6 mixed ability by TC6 mixed ability

PREP6	Count	TC6 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	6					6 4.1
	2		1	1	1		3 2.1
	3	4	19	9			32 21.9
	4	2	12	17	11		42 28.8
PREP6	5		18	23	16	6	63 43.2
	Column Total	12 8.2	50 34.2	50 34.2	28 19.2	6 4.1	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.38574	.06286	5.80295	

PREP7 average ability by TC7 average ability

PREP7	Count	TC7 1	2	3	4	Row Total
PREP7	1	3				3 2.1
	2	16	21	2		39 26.7
	3	8	37	11		56 38.4
	4	6	13	17	6	42 28.8
PREP7	5			6		6 4.1
	Column Total	33 22.6	71 48.6	36 24.7	6 4.1	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.46447	.06133	7.10948	

PREP8 Less able by TC8 less able

PREP8	Count	TC8 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP8	1	5				2	7 4.8
	2		4		2		6 4.1
	3	2	19	13	5	3	42 28.8
	4	5	20	14	12		51 34.9
	5		10	16	10	4	40 27.4
	Column Total	12 8.2	53 36.3	43 29.5	29 19.9	9 6.2	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.19989	.07452	2.67068	

PREP9 more able by TC9 more able

PREP9	Count	TC9 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP9	1	8	3			1	12 8.2
	2	28	24	1			53 36.3
	3	7	16	17	2		42 28.8
	4	8	14	7	3		32 21.9
	5	3	1	2	1		7 4.8
	Column Total	54 37.0	58 39.7	27 18.5	6 4.1	1 .7	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.31777	.06767	4.67155	

PREP10 socially deprived by TC10 socially deprived

PREP10 Count	TC10 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	2			3		5 3.4
2	3	1	1			5 3.4
3	1	6	4	3	2	16 11.0
4	9	14	22	11	3	59 40.4
PREP10 5	1	2	9	39	10	61 41.8
Column Total	16 11.0	23 15.8	36 24.7	56 38.4	15 10.3	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.42864	.06348	6.77345	

PREP11 administrative duties by TC11 administrative duties

PREP11	Count	TC11 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1		4	1		1		6 4.1
2		1	6				7 4.8
3		10	6	3			19 13.0
4			2	11	5		18 12.3
REP11 5		16	23	18	20	19	96 65.8
Column Total		31 21.2	38 26.0	32 21.9	26 17.8	19 13.0	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.29731	.06101	4.52498	

PREP12 pastoral duties by TC12 pastoral duties

PREP12 Count	TC12 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	1					1 .7
2	3					3 2.1
3	2	9	7			18 12.3
4	7	9	15	6	1	38 26.0
5	3	31	14	20	18	86 58.9
Column Total	16 11.0	49 33.6	36 24.7	26 17.8	19 13.0	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.30157	.06151	4.61990	

PREP13 audio-visual equipment by TC13 audio-visual equipment

PREP13	Count	TC13 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP13	1	1	6	3	1		11 7.5
	2	7	14	9	4	1	35 24.0
	3	3	14	17	5		39 26.7
	4	1	14	10	10		35 24.0
PREP13	5	4	6	9	1	6	26 17.8
	Column Total	16 11.0	54 37.0	48 32.9	21 14.4	7 4.8	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.16828	.07197	2.32622	

PREP14 special needs by TC14 special needs

PREP14	Count	TC14 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP14	1					3	3 2.1
	2	2	1			3	6 4.1
	3	1	8	9	10	4	32 21.9
	4		5	14	18	8	45 30.8
	5	2	6	10	16	26	60 41.1
	Column Total	5 3.4	20 13.7	33 22.6	44 30.1	44 30.1	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.18071	.07902	2.29356	

PREP15 equal opportunities by TC15 equal opportunities

PREP15	Count	TC15 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP15	1	9	6	1	1		17 11.6
	2	16	15				31 21.2
	3	9	8	11	3	1	32 21.9
	4	1	8	12	8	4	33 22.6
PREP15	5	8	8		11	6	33 22.6
	Column Total	43 29.5	45 30.8	24 16.4	23 15.8	11 7.5	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.40020	.06168	6.37046	

PREP16 liaise with parents by TC16 liaise with parents

Count	TC16 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PREP16 1	4				1	5
						3.4
2		2	3			5
						3.4
3	4	4	4	3		15
						10.3
4	14	25	14	2	2	57
						39.0
PREP16 5	3	28	12	17	4	64
						43.8
Column Total	25	59	33	22	7	146
	17.1	40.4	22.6	15.1	4.8	100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.22407	.07184	3.10686	

PP1 Maltese reading by TCP1 Maltese reading

PP1 \ TCP1	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	7	1				8 5.5
2	13	24	5		1	43 29.5
3	2	8	5	12	3	30 20.5
4	3	6		6	3	18 12.3
5		1		3	43	47 32.2
Column Total	25 17.1	40 27.4	10 6.8	21 14.4	50 34.2	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.71880	.04085	18.63382	

PP2 English reading by TCP2 English reading

PP2	Count	TCP2 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	7	1				8 5.5
	2	9	14	4			27 18.5
	3	3	20	6	2	4	35 24.0
	4	2	10	1	7		20 13.7
PP2	5				5	51	56 38.4
	Column Total	21 14.4	45 30.8	11 7.5	14 9.6	55 37.7	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.74796	.03668	21.70554	

PP3 Maltese creative writing by TCP3 Maltese creative writing

PP3	Count	TCP3 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
	1	4	7		2		13 8.9
	2	9	11		1	1	22 15.1
	3	5	10	4		6	25 17.1
	4		9	14	8	5	36 24.7
PP3	5		3		2	45	50 34.2
	Column Total	18 12.3	40 27.4	18 12.3	13 8.9	57 39.0	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.65721	.04490	15.06380	

PP4 English creative writing by TCP4 English creative writing

PP4	Count	TCP4 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP4	1	5	1				6 4.1
	2	10	11		1		22 15.1
	3	1	15	2		4	22 15.1
	4		19	9	7	2	37 25.3
PP4	5		4		7	48	59 40.4
	Column Total	16 11.0	50 34.2	11 7.5	15 10.3	54 37.0	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.73148	.04075	16.87968	

PP5 Mathematics by TCP5 Mathematics

PP5	Count	TCP5 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP5	1	7				1	8 5.5
	2	1	22		2	1	26 17.8
	3	9	8	5	5	3	30 20.5
	4		11	4	8	6	29 19.9
PP5	5				3	50	53 36.3
	Column Total	17 11.6	41 28.1	9 6.2	18 12.3	61 41.8	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.69818	.04158	17.49040	

PP6 Religious Education by TCP6 Religious education

PP6 Count	TCP6 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	5					5 3.4
2	2	12		1		15 10.3
3	5	12	6		5	28 19.2
4	2	9	4	14	5	34 23.3
PP6 5			2	9	53	64 43.8
Column Total	14 9.6	33 22.6	12 8.2	24 16.4	63 43.2	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.70384	.04015	16.25346	

PP7 Social Studies by TCP7 Social Studies

PP7 \ TCP7 Count	1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	7					7 4.8
2	2	3		3	1	9 6.2
3	10	4	9		2	25 17.1
4	3	11	9	8	2	33 22.6
5		5	9	6	52	72 49.3
Column Total	22 15.1	23 15.8	27 18.5	17 11.6	57 39.0	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.61479	.04991	12.20440	

PP8 environmental studies by TCP8 Environmental studies

PP8	Count	TCP8 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP8	1	7	1		1		9 6.2
	2	2	3		3		8 5.5
	3	5	8	7		1	21 14.4
	4	4	9	12	9	1	35 24.0
PP8	5		5	4	8	56	73 50.0
	Column Total	18 12.3	26 17.8	23 15.8	21 14.4	58 39.7	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.67194	.04492	14.90897	

PP9 art and craft by TCP9 Art and Craft

PP9	Count	TCP9 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
PP9	1	4		2	1		7 4.8
	2	5	4	1			10 6.8
	3	3	7	4		3	17 11.6
	4	1	7	13	17	6	44 30.1
	5	4	4	3	5	52	68 46.6
	Column Total	17 11.6	22 15.1	23 15.8	23 15.8	61 41.8	146 100.0

Statistic	Value	ASE1	T-value	Approximate Significance
Kendall's Tau-b	.58481	.05989	9.51492	

PP10 physical education by TCP10 Physical Education

PP10 / Count	TCP10 1	2	3	4	5	Row Total
1	2	1	1		1	5 3.4
2	8	11	5		3	27 18.5
3	1	5	9			15 10.3
4	1		19	13	2	35 24.0
PP10 5			3	7	54	64 43.8
Column Total	12 8.2	17 11.6	37 25.3	20 13.7	60 41.1	146 100.0

Statistic	Approximate Significance	Value	ASE1	T-value
Kendall's Tau-b		.74481	.04514	15.69500

Appendix V Data for Factor Analysis of Questionnaires

A) Percentage of Variances for Factors of the Perceived Preparation Questionnaire

B) Percentage of Variances for Factors of the Perceived Competence Questionnaire

C) Loadings for Factors of the Perceived Competence Questionnaire

Appendix V A) Percentage of Variances for Factors of the Perceived Preparation Questionnaire

SPSS/PC+

- - - - F A C T O R A N A L Y S I S - - - -

Variable	Communality	*	Factor	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var	Cum Pct
		*				
PREP1	.53913	*	1	8.45703	32.5	32.5
PREP2	.58833	*	2	4.72418	18.2	50.7
PREP3	.73806	*	3	1.67077	6.4	57.1
PREP4	.73070	*	4	1.28890	5.0	62.1
PREP5	.57429	*	5	1.15723	4.5	66.5
PREP6	.79091	*	6	1.11812	4.3	70.8
PREP7	.76299	*				
PREP8	.69892	*				
PREP9	.53197	*				
PREP10	.64992	*				
PREP11	.57398	*				
PREP12	.68117	*				

SPSS/PC+

- - - - F A C T O R A N A L Y S I S - - - -

Variable	Communality	*	Factor	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var	Cum Pct

Appendix V B) Percentage of Variances for Factors of the Perceived Competence Questionnaire

SPSS/PC+

This procedure was completed at 19:28:45
FACTOR /VARIABLES TC1 TO TCP10 /SAVE REGRESSION (ALL FACOMP).

This FACTOR analysis requires 85128 (83.1K) BYTES of memory.

- - - - F A C T O R A N A L Y S I S - - - -

Analysis Number 1 Listwise deletion of cases with missing values

Extraction for Analysis 1

Variable	Communality	*	Factor	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var	Cum Pct
		*				
TC1	1.00000	*	1	9.70291	37.3	37.3
TC2	1.00000	*	2	4.57494	17.6	54.9
TC3	1.00000	*	3	1.57751	6.1	61.0
TC4	1.00000	*	4	1.48255	5.7	66.7
TC5	1.00000	*	5	1.11051	4.3	71.0

Appendix V C) Loadings for Factors of the Perceived Competence Questionnaire

- - - - F A C T O R A N A L Y S I S - - - -

PC Extracted 5 factors.

Factor Matrix:

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
TC1	.48989	.30483	.01988	.01186	-.27852
TC2	.40883	.38574	-.05918	.20328	-.44026
TC3	.40560	.47061	-.20855	.46429	-.08704
TC4	.42508	.51660	-.18161	.37366	.06499
TC5	.48758	.49235	-.09081	.18262	.12763
TC6	.48096	.47765	.11449	.05685	-.39608
TC7	.47380	.49801	-.19199	-.23635	-.19866
TC8	.29435	.38516	.45761	-.20037	-.11355
TC9	.38243	.33732	-.51869	-.08131	-.01805
TC10	.46820	.40244	.52559	-.27743	.05314
TC11	.34912	.46903	.01913	-.08083	.33123
TC12	.46432	.34982	.17242	-.48688	.21912
TC13	.38150	.40883	-.19023	-.18160	.07335
TC14	.49781	.26107	.45474	-.06014	-.27864
TC15	.42792	.39585	-.31518	-.30227	.22044
TC16	.50488	.37303	-.27082	-.21913	.19990
TCP1	.83695	-.36362	-.03222	.00669	-.09671
TCP2	.84284	-.42563	-.07112	.01110	.02633
TCP3	.81273	-.38248	.00098	.04184	-.07748
TCP4	.84291	-.42269	-.03971	-.00369	.03057
TCP5	.81626	-.38104	-.09928	-.00080	.02678
TCP6	.78806	-.40660	-.02842	.03068	.09524
TCP7	.84528	-.39892	.01801	-.00195	.08141
TCP8	.81437	-.35778	.10208	.03870	.14424
TCP9	.71415	-.29618	-.00993	-.02476	-.07652
TCP10	.65451	-.23400	.20332	18601	- 01149

Appendix VI Detailed Description of Primary Schooling in Malta and the Classroom Practice of the Nine Teachers Studied

APPENDIX VI

THE BEGINNING TEACHERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Maltese Primary Classrooms

There are currently in 1994, 89 state primary schools and 45 private ones. Altogether they cater for 35,000 pupils. Over 1,200 teachers are engaged in state primary schools, while 500 teachers are employed by the primary private sector.

Pupils in Maltese state schools are predominantly working-class (Sultana, 1991). The state school sector is controlled through a centralised bureaucracy with all the implications of inefficiency that this entails. Darmanin (1990) describes the experience of state school teachers as being characterised by lack of resources, autonomy and control of workload. Centralised curriculum planning and syllabus and the shortage of textbooks are the major constraints on their classroom practice of state school teachers. State schools depend entirely on public funding. In the early 1970s, the state schools suffered hasty innovations, such as de-streaming and comprehensivisation. The then Labour government had to reverse these innovations as they were met with considerable opposition by both teachers and the general public. Officially streaming now only takes place in the later three years of primary schooling.

Profiles of Teachers in their Classrooms

Here follows a brief description of the practices of each teacher observed in the classroom situation and a summary of each teacher' s responses to the interview.

Teacher 1

The first classroom that was observed is situated in one of the largest towns in the centre of Malta. This town has two state primary schools. This Year 2 class is in the state school which incorporates the early primary years.

This classroom (like most other classrooms in Maltese state schools) is dominated by two large blackboards at the front of the classroom, which overlook the teacher's desk. On both sides of the classroom there are huge windows which are draped with curtains of a yellowish material. The left-over space on the walls of the classroom is covered with neat charts, produced by the teacher, and some impeccable children's writing. In this particular class there is a shopping corner with plastic coins and priced objects. There are heaps of pupils' exercise books tied up with white ribbon on two side tables placed under the windows of one side of the room. The various colours of the plastic covers of the exercise books indicate their subject and whether they are intended for classwork or homework.

The 18 pupils in this class (eight girls and ten boys) are seated at single tables, all facing the teacher's desk and blackboards at the front of the classroom. The boys are seated on one side of the room and the girls on the other side. When asked about the reason for this during the interview the teacher could not come up with a reason for this. However, later on in the interview she sought to rectify this by emphasising that this was in order to keep discipline.

At the start of the first observation session in the morning the teacher asked the pupils to divide the pages of their copybooks into three. This operation took fifteen minutes for all the pupils to complete. It was only after the teacher was satisfied that all the pupils had completed this task that she proceeded to write out a number of division and

multiplication sums on the blackboard from a text-book which the children did not have. The children laboriously copied these out in to their exercise books paying great attention to drawing their lines properly. After the teacher was satisfied that a substantial number of her pupils had copied all or most of the sums that she had written on the board on to their copybooks, she asked them to put their pencils down. She wanted to remind them about a few things before they went on to work them out. After asking for volunteers to recite the seven and eight times tables she changed her mind and got all the pupils to recite them altogether for three times. Then she asked them to recite them silently in their heads for five minutes. After this a boy was asked to recite out loud both times tables. On the two occasions that he floundered he was prompted by the teacher and his classmates.

Following this the teacher asked them to start working out on their own the sums that they had copied from the board. At this stage a parent came to the class to hand to the teacher her son's lunch which he had forgotten to bring with him to the school. The teacher engaged in conversation with this parent for a few minutes as the pupils continued working on their sums individually. She then went around the classroom to assist individual pupils. Some of the pupils were visibly anxious as they were having some problems with some of the sums that they had been set. On the whole the rapport of the teacher with the pupils was quite good. She was switching between two tones of voice all the time: a high-pitched, shrill one which she used to address all the class and a low-pitched, caring one which she used with individual pupils. When she was convinced that most of the pupils had completed all or most of the sums she proceeded to carry out a class correction of the set sums. She did this by asking different pupils to work out the sum on the board by following what they had done in their exercise book. If this was correct she asked that child to lend out his/her exercise book to those who had got it wrong so that they could copy it out. Since often there was a high demand for this correct version, other pupils who had worked out their sums correctly were requested to lend out their exercise books.

When interviewed, this teacher expressed herself to be very happy on her teaching job. Though she admits that her primary motivation is her salary, she derives great satisfaction from observing that the children in her class are making progress. She is dissatisfied with the fact that the pupils in her class are of mixed ability as she feels that this hinders class progress as a whole. She feels that this first year of teaching has

provided her with valuable experiences of teaching. Her main complaints are about the dearth of teaching resources available in schools and the fact that there is no official support system for beginning teachers, with the result that they are left 'to flounder on their own'. She has received immense support from her father who is also a teacher. Although she has a lot of self-confidence in her own abilities and skills, she feels strongly about the fact that she has had inadequate training in the subject-specific areas of the curriculum. She feels that the curriculum is too broad and the pupils are expected to engage in too much writing. This she feels is especially inappropriate for a mixed-ability class. When asked about her future career plans she reiterated that she was happy with her job and intended to keep at it for a long time.

Teacher 2

The second classroom observed is in a school situated in the south of the island. The 19 pupils (13 boys and 6 girls) of this Year 2 class are seated in twos at dual desks, with each girl paired with a boy. They sit at tables facing the front of the class where the teacher's desk and blackboards are situated. There are different areas in this class devoted to a shop (with goods going at very cheap prices!!), a science corner, a low table with work and reading cards, a display of new vocabulary and a chart depicting a butterfly race; each butterfly signifying a different pupil. There are also some displays of very neat and correct pupils' writing.

At the start of the observation session the pupils are set a number of addition and subtraction story sums in English from a handout prepared by the teacher. After an initial class reading of the handout the teacher asks for volunteers to work out some of the sums in front of the rest of the class. A lot of time is spent on the language, translating the stories from English to Maltese. The teacher presents the understanding of the story as crucial to the working out of a particular sum. After this, the relevant exercise books are distributed by two pupils. A lot of time is taken up with writing down the date and copying the story sums from the handout to the exercise books. The teacher goes round the class for two minutes to ensure that all the pupils have started working. She urges them repeatedly to write neatly and to have the appropriate

columns for tens and units. While the children work on their own the teacher marks a pile of exercise books (which contain work from a previous day) at her desk. Occasionally a pupil comes out to the teacher's desk to query her about something. They are aware that not more than three pupils at a time are allowed at the teacher's desk. Some pupils who finish much earlier than the others choose work-cards from a pile on a side-table to complete on their own. The teacher did not envisage that most of the pupils were going to complete all their sums about 30 minutes before it was time for the mid-morning break. Therefore the next ten minutes are spent on revising some of the times tables. These tables like all numbers in Malta, including telephone numbers, are given out in English (although there exists a Maltese equivalent). There is both choral and individual reciting of the times tables. After this the pupils are allowed to leave the classroom to drink their milk in the corridor. (Free milk is distributed to state primary school pupils every day.) Soon it is time for the mid-morning break which lasts 15 minutes. During this time the pupils have a snack which they bring from home and are allowed to play in the school yard.

After the break it is time for the English Reading lesson in this class. The Ladybird Keyword Scheme is used to teach English in all the primary state schools. There is initially a class reading of the relevant pages and then individual pupils are requested to read out loud. The pupils show themselves to be eager to have a go at reading. Occasionally the teacher intervenes to emphasise the proper deciphering of punctuation marks. There is continuous translation and switching from English to Maltese. Then the teacher asks the pupils to say out sentences about a picture in the Ladybird book. She makes grammatical points (plurals, opposites, prepositions, etc.) regarding these sentences and occasionally asks the pupils to spell out particular words by starting the spelling of the word herself and asking them to continue. The lesson is ended by getting the pupils to read out loud the relevant pages altogether as a class and by asking individual pupils.

The Maltese Writing lesson follows. The teacher displays a large black and white picture depicting a man walking down a country path whose hat had been blown off by the wind. She asks the pupils to provide her with some 'beautiful' sentences about this picture. The first volunteer proffers a sentence which the teacher feels is too long. As the pupils make up sentences the teacher asks them to spell out some of the words that they are using. The teacher uses this to make a number of grammatical points about

Maltese. The teacher repeats the pupils' sentences and writes the more difficult words on the board. Then she goes on to ask them to spell out these words through syllabization over and over again. All this takes 15 minutes, after which, the relevant exercise books are distributed so that the pupils can write down the sentences using the vocabulary provided on the board.

This Year 2 class exudes a calm and relaxed atmosphere. The pupils show themselves to be very happy in the class. This notwithstanding the fact that in the interview the teacher talked about how insecure and emotionally disturbed most of her pupils were when they were promoted to her class from Year 1. She claims that her main task has been to build their confidence. This teacher expresses herself to be happy at her teaching job. She expresses concern about the lack of support forthcoming from the Department of Education. Lack of resources entailed long hours of copying from the board on the pupils' part. She derives most satisfaction from observing that the children in her class are making progress and that they are happy. She said that she makes an effort to make learning fun and relevant and not boring and to integrate it as much as possible with their play. Lack of time to cover all the syllabus, parental pressure for the setting of more written work and the huge amount of marking of exercise books that she is expected to engage in are seen by this teacher as her main sources of dissatisfaction. In her opinion the syllabus is too vast and does not allow the teacher to introduce other topics which do not feature in it. She feels that this first year of teaching experience has given her a deeper understanding of pupils of this age group. She feels that now she is in a better position to deal with difficulties and management issues in the classroom. Although she is quite confident about her knowledge of the various subjects in the primary school curriculum, she feels that she needs to develop further specific classroom skills and practical ideas for lessons. She feels that the other Year 2 teachers in her school are quite supportive. She plans to stay on in teaching, preferably with the same age group or at most with a Year 3 class.

Teacher 3

In this Year 3 class, there are 29 pupils in all (18 girls and 11 boys). The head teacher has a very high opinion of this beginning teacher and seeks to support her by ensuring

that there are few disruptions to her class in order to allow her to get on with her job. Some old charts which have lost their colour are hanging on the otherwise bare walls of this classroom. Despite the overcrowding the pupils seem to be generally quite happy to be in this class.

At the start of the observation session the teacher spends about ten minutes going over common errors committed by pupils when writing sentences and answering language items in tests. This is followed by a 'quiz' which lasts for about one hour. The questions, which are of a factual nature about canons of the Catholic Church, are derived from material covered during previous Religion lessons. The pupils who are asked questions in turn are awarded points for every correct answer. The teacher keeps referring to an imminent test: ' You would have got this wrong in the test. This is how you have to know them for the test, parrot-like and by heart. This is not desirable, but that is how things are.' The emphasis is on the number of marks that each child has obtained. Some pupils are singled out as having obtained zero marks. This induces most of the pupils to religiously keep count of their own marks. Any help offered by any pupil to a class mate is vehemently discouraged. After some time the pupils are conspicuously bored.

This is followed by a Maltese Grammar lesson, dealing with the comparative and superlative forms of Maltese adjectives. The first example provided by the teacher is striking, as although she has presented a word which features in the Maltese national anthem, it is not in current usage. The teaching of Maltese is conducted throughout as if Maltese is a foreign language rather than the mother tongue. The 'quiz' format of the previous Religion lesson is carried into this one. When the teacher feels constrained to provide clues to an answer she reminds the pupils that this is going to earn them less marks. Sometime before the mid-morning break the teacher checks herself about the emphasis on test marks and tells a child: ' The marks are not important as long as you eventually get it right.' After the mid-morning break the teacher carries the 'quiz' format into the Mathematics lesson. She attempts to revise a range of mathematics topics covered throughout the year by asking them questions. Correct answers are awarded points.

The teacher of this class claims that she feels that she has not been adequately prepared by the training course to teach the subject-specific areas of the primary curriculum.

She derives satisfaction from the fact that her pupils, although not intelligent, are motivated and they do try to achieve. She has quite a mix of pupils: 'some of them come from broken families and others are the children of teachers'. On the whole she feels that she has a good rapport with both the children and their parents. Among the things that she finds annoying she lists the lack of co-ordination amongst the members of the school staff. However, she thinks that this has been changing a little since the head teacher started attending a part-time course in Educational Administration. She feels also that the demands of the primary syllabus and the parents' fixation with tests and written work have stopped her from doing more interesting work (like projects) with her pupils. However, she does not think that continuous assessment would be a better alternative for examinations as teachers would inflate the marks of their pupils in order to save their faces.

The teacher has claimed that throughout this first year on the job she has found teaching to be very hectic and exhausting. For her it has been all the time like a ' race against time'. She feels that by now, eight months into the scholastic year, she has got to know and understand her pupils very well. She sees this as very positive although she feels that she would have liked to 'personalise' her teaching more and to deal with her pupils on a more individual basis. This teacher feels too that she has not been adequately prepared in the subject-specific areas of the curriculum. Also she recognises that she requires assistance with the more 'practical' side of teaching like the use of visual aids. She does not receive any support from the head teacher and the other teachers of the school. She does, however, receive support on an emotional level from her membership of a local social group which is made up in the main of other teachers. This has helped her to come to empathise with the pupils and not to adopt an 'us' and 'them' stance. In her opinion, the syllabus is very crammed, exam-oriented and irrelevant for her pupils' age-group. She aspires to follow post-graduate studies in the teaching of children with special needs as she would like to transfer to a special school or to teach lower ability pupils.

Teacher 4

There are 27 pupils (14 boys and 13 girls) in this Year 3 class which is located in a school in the North West of the island. There is a foreign girl (of English origins) in this class who seems throughout to be exceptionally bored with the work that the pupils of the class are being asked to do. Most of it involves copying out from the board and books. She seems to feel very much left out of things. There are also two pupils from another class of a higher level, whose teacher is absent. It is usual practice that when a teacher is absent, the pupils of that class are distributed to other classes which are not necessarily of the same level. Throughout the duration of the observation session they stay copying over and over again a poem from a Maltese reader.

The first lesson that is observed is one dealing with fractions. The teacher's introductory explanation is followed up by the whole class working out various sums from the set text-book. Throughout the duration of this activity there is a high level of teacher-pupil interaction. The pupils ask many questions and the teacher responds by clarifying and amplifying points. She provides examples by drawing bar graphs on the board. The pace of the lesson is very brisk and the teacher dishes out praise profusely. At times she even gets the other pupils of the class to praise in chorus one of their classmates who has answered correctly what she considers to be a particularly difficult question.

The Mathematics lesson is followed very smoothly by an English Comprehension lesson. The teacher introduces the lesson which was from a set text-book by reading through the set passage. Then she reads it slowly again, pausing occasionally to explain what she considers to be difficult words and expressions. The teacher attempts to use English throughout, however, at times when she meets with blank faces she repeats her question in Maltese. There is frequent switching from one language to another half-way through a sentence. She insists throughout that the pupils put their hand up if they want to ask a question and to await their turn.

The pupils are seated in twos at dual desks. The classroom layout is traditional with plenty of charts hanging on the walls. There is very little display of children's work. This class has a reading corner with mainly Ladybird readers. At times the teacher

reverts to shouting to control her pupils. A lot of time is expended in the distribution of exercise books. While the pupils work on their own, the teacher uses this time to mark previous work.

The teacher feels that there are many disruptions to the work of the class because of the daily distribution of free milk, the endless collections for special causes, and the sale of magazines, etc. In her opinion, all this minimises the amount of time left over in the classroom for work. Notwithstanding this the teacher feels happy on her teaching job as there is now less pressure than when she was on the training course. In her opinion, there is a world of difference between teaching practice and regular teaching. She feels that on teaching practice the pupils are very aware that their student teacher is inexperienced and they play on this. Classroom management is much easier now, although she needs to get angry with the pupils occasionally. Another advantage of being a regular teacher, she feels, is that there is enough time over a year for the pupils to get used to the teacher and vice-versa. Now she can focus entirely on the pupils rather than trying to please the university tutors. She derives great satisfaction from delivering lessons and obtaining a positive response from her pupils. She enjoys it especially when her pupils manage to grasp concepts, especially in number work during the Mathematics lessons. Her major source of dissatisfaction is as mentioned earlier the continuous disruptions which waste time and render the pupils restless.

She feels she has made most progress in 'classroom management and discipline'. The experience of this first year has helped her to identify in which areas her pupils need further assistance. In her opinion there is too much emphasis on tests, examinations and writing. She feels that the training course has not prepared her and her fellow students to teach low ability children, especially those with behavioural problems. She recognises that she needs further professional development with classroom management, especially in problematic classes and with the art and craft areas of the curriculum as the peripatetic art teacher never visits her class. In her opinion, the syllabus of these areas is very restricted and does not involve any creativity. In the part of the training course which deals with art they had covered only History of Art. Also there is no training in doing 'practical' craft with the early primary years. Most of the training is aimed at high-achievers. It is as if you are taught ' how to drive without being shown how to park'.

The main source of emotional and moral support for this teacher is her family. At the school a fellow teacher, who is also a recent graduate and who teaches the same age level has been very supportive too. She detests particularly the attitude of most of the other teachers that one's class is one's own business and nobody has a right to interfere. This territorial mentality was driven home to this teacher when a fellow teacher deemed it fit to apologise profusely to her when she had entered her classroom by mistake. In her opinion the syllabus is quite relevant in that it is graded in a way that the same topics are dealt with from year to year. It is only the level of difficulty which changes. She intends to stay on in her teaching job and at the primary level. Her teaching experience in the secondary school had not appealed to her. She is, however, apprehensive that she may be asked in the future to teach a low-ability class as she does not feel that she has been prepared for this by her training.

Teacher 5

There are 24 pupils (15 girls and 9 boys) in this Year 3 class in a school situated in the centre of the island. Again, in this class there are two girls from another class whose teacher is absent. These two pupils sit at the back of the class without doing anything much throughout the whole observation session. The teacher of this class has a special needs helper to assist her with a physically handicapped girl who is in a wheelchair. The helper's brief is to help the child to move within the school and to give her individual attention with her schoolwork.

The usual set of charts and some children's work are on display. The class has a reading corner with a small number of books, in the main brought in by the children from their homes. The approach is again very much talk and chalk and whole class teaching.

The first lesson that is observed is a Mathematics one concerning fractions. The teacher introduces these by writing down some fractions on the board and then proceeding to show them how to transform these into decimals. Fifteen minutes into this activity the deputy head comes into the classroom to talk to the teacher and the pupils about a forthcoming activity. The pupils wait doing nothing. This lasts for about seven

minutes. After this the teacher sets the pupils a task where they have to shade in colour an area corresponding to decimal values on their copybooks which contains squared paper. The pupils go about this task in a very mechanical way. It is interesting to note how the teacher presents the material in a very abstract way to start off with and the concrete activity comes as a follow-up. The teacher spends some minutes going round the classroom to ensure that all the pupils have started working on their task. There is some confusion as some of the pupils have mislaid their copybooks and/or their coloured pencils. She expects them to work on their own. Throughout there is no evidence of group work. Then she sits at her desk to mark a pile of copybooks. Those pupils who have a query about their work come to her desk one by one. Those who complete the task earlier than the rest become restless. At the end of the lesson the teacher sets some homework from the Mathematics set text-book. There is a negative reaction from the pupils about this as it is more of the same work as they had just carried out in the classroom. As there are still some minutes to go before the mid-morning break the teacher asks the pupils to take out their Ladybird reader. The teacher calls upon a child to read a page from this reader. Then it is the turn of this child to call out the name of a classmate to read the same page. This goes on for a few minutes, with a number of pupils reading the same page over and over again, until the school bell rings for the mid-morning break. This procedure is used often in this class to fill in the time between lessons and other activities.

After the mid-morning break it is time for an English vocabulary lesson about people's occupations. The teacher starts the lesson by asking the pupils to say out their fathers' occupation. It is still very common for Maltese mothers to stay at home, especially if they have young children. This is however changing fast, although the jobs that the majority of working women engage in involve unskilled labour. The teacher proceeds to write on the blackboard the various occupations as they are named by the pupils. The ones provided in Maltese, she translates into English. The pupils are then asked to write down sentences using these words.

On the whole the teacher maintains a very relaxed atmosphere in this class. The pupils show themselves to be highly motivated and very keen to participate. The teacher deals with the pupils as a class and individual needs, both intellectual and social, are not attended to. The pupils find the material presented to them generally very easy and unchallenging. The teacher feels particularly positive about classroom management and

about her rapport with parents and other members of the teaching staff in her school. On the other hand she expresses misgivings about the fact that her class is mixed ability. She is particularly concerned about the fact that she does not feel competent to deal with low-ability pupils. She feels that these pupils have not registered any progress throughout the year. In her opinion the university course has prepared her and her fellow Student Teachers to deal only with ideal classroom situations and has not shown them how to adapt to different situations.

This teacher derives greatest satisfaction from when her pupils show progress in learning, when they are well-behaved and when she has been successful in helping them in some emotional or social problem. She is particularly annoyed by the continuous disruption to lessons, especially the noise from the yard of the neighbouring state primary 'A' school. She feels that throughout this first year of teaching she has made considerable progress in classroom management and teaching methodology. She has come to check often for understanding on the part of her pupils and not to take anything for granted. She feels also that having a physically handicapped child in her classroom has broadened her perspective of educational needs. This teacher, too, feels that she needs further professional development in the subject-specific areas of the curriculum, especially in the science education area as there are no resources available for this. Her family have been her major source of emotional and moral support. One particular teacher friend from another school has been particularly supportive too on the emotional level. However, she has not received any professional support. In her opinion the primary syllabus is largely irrelevant to the children's life experiences. She provides examples of this from the syllabi for Mathematics, Maltese and English. Her intention is to continue teaching and to possibly pursue postgraduate studies.

Teacher 6

There are 23 pupils (10 boys and 13 girls) in this Year 3 class in a primary 'C' situated in the centre of the island. On the day of the observation there are four pupils (two boys and two girls) from another class whose teacher is absent from school on the day. The class is shabby and bare with the exception of some cyclostyled prints which have been coloured in by the pupils on the walls. The pupils are seated in three groups of

six pupils and one group of five, facing the front of the class. However there is no group work. The purpose of this grouping is for the teacher to be able to award points to the different 'teams' according to their performance in class.

At the start of the observation session the teacher sets the pupils from the other class a written task. She then proceeds to introduce the lesson concerning fractions to her class. She does this by referring them back to some concrete work on fractions they had carried out in the previous few days. After demonstrating some fractions on the board, she asks children to come out to the board to represent graphically the fractions that she has presented them with. They are expected to represent these on an abacus which they are to draw on the board. The teacher conducts this activity in a very fast manner. This forces the pupils to try to guess the answers. When they do not get it right the teacher moves on to another child. Then for a few minutes the teacher writes some examples herself on the board and proceeds to ask the class as a whole whether they think that it is correct or not. This is followed by the distribution of copybooks. She asks them to divide their pages in two and to carry out a task similar to the one which has just been completed by the whole class.

In this class, too, the pupils seem to find the materials which have been presented to them unstimulating and find it hard to concentrate on the tasks at hand. At various points during the observation session the teacher bangs her wooden ruler on her desk to attract the pupils' attention. There are the usual stacks of copybooks waiting to be marked on her desk. She engages in this at every opportunity she has rather than monitoring the pupils' classwork. The emphasis throughout is on written work. Some children who finish earlier than the others do not know what to do next. It is evident that whole-class teaching within a mixed-ability situation is not appropriate. The pupils who work very fast are kept back from covering more material and those who are slow keep lagging behind.

After the mid-morning break a class correction of the set classwork is conducted. The response of each child who has been nominated by the teacher elicits from the teacher, responses like 'One backwards', 'Yellow, two forward'. This refers to the number of points that each of the five teams (each named after a different colour) is being awarded or is losing depending on the responses of their members. The points are occasionally marked by the teacher on a big chart titled the 'Race Car Competition'. This is

followed by a Maltese Poetry lesson. The teacher reads through a poem from a set text-book and asks some of the pupils to read though it. Then she explains some of the more difficult idiomatic expressions, most of them archaic, which feature in this poem. It is evident that the language of this poem is way above the difficulty level familiar to the children. At the end of the lesson the teacher attempts to engage the pupils in a game which involves the pupils in writing out expressions on the board suggested by her or the pupils themselves. She goes to a lot of trouble to explain to them some of the more difficult expressions that she has suggested.

The teacher claims that the university course has increased the frustration and unhappiness of teachers as they now have higher expectations whereas the situation in the schools has remained unchanged. For her, teaching is a very tiring job and she finds herself thinking about it all the time. She looks forward to the holidays. She derives the greatest satisfaction from the human element of teaching. She enjoys the small village atmosphere of her school and working with the pupils. Although she does not agree with how learning and teaching in her school are so exam - oriented she feels that the teachers are partially to blame for this situation. This, she feels, is very restrictive and puts a lot of pressure on the teacher which is in turn displaced on to the pupils. The teacher's 'hands are tied' and she feels that it is very hard to establish a professional relationship with the pupils under these conditions. This first year of regular teaching and 'immersion in a classroom' has helped her to grow as a person and to accumulate plenty of experience. She now looks at things differently and has a more realistic outlook. She feels that she has managed to create a 'positive' atmosphere in her classroom which she feels is more conducive to learning. The emphasis is on the human process: 'One needs to become more transparent and more human. If they trust you, then they learn.'

She would like to keep updated in her main subject specialisation, just in case she eventually moves to the secondary sector. She feels that she needs further training in teaching children with special needs, especially those with specific disabilities, like hearing-impairment. The university course she considers to have been too theoretical and not so strong on the practical level. In her opinion, there need to be opportunities for sharing with other teachers in order to be able to make sense of the present classroom realities. Attitudes, like those favouring streaming, need to change. When she started this first year of teaching she had expected to receive some sort of support

from the head teacher and other teachers. However this has not been forthcoming. The head teacher is too busy with other things. There is no space allotted where teachers can meet away from the school yard. At any rate: 'when you try to talk about teaching, the other teachers play you down and change the subject'. She would like to receive support, especially, with under-achieving pupils.

The crammed syllabus does not allow one to 'sit back and reflect' and to 'put your mind in order'. It is too academic and exam-oriented. There is no opportunity for curriculum development in schools: 'It is a take it or leave it situation'. The time available for it is too limited. She feels that certain concepts are introduced too early in the syllabus for this age-group. Although she does not agree with the syllabus, she feels obliged to deliver it: 'I would feel guilty if a specific item, which I had not covered, were to feature in the end of year test'. No support is given to the teacher in terms of the curriculum or syllabus in terms of materials or expertise.

This teacher intends to move to a private school in the near future. She had opted to teach at a state primary school, but, ' you can bear it for only so long. You end up feeling empty inside.' Even if she were to move to the secondary level, she would still opt for a private school. The state Junior Lyceum, in her opinion, produces 'robots' and she would not like to be part of that system. At any rate she would not like to remain in the state sector for more than another four years as she feels that this will push her into a rut and then it would be very difficult to get out of it. Notwithstanding all this she feels that her pupils appreciate her, especially the fact that she is quite young. She plays on this to win their co-operation. She claims that she is doing some experimenting with group work, but feels that a more traditional approach to teaching is more compatible with her own personality.

Teacher 7

This Year 1 class is situated in one of the fishing villages to the south of the island. There are 17 pupils in this class, eight boys and nine girls. The pupils are seated in groups of four at low tables. One child sits on his own in the middle of the class. The

class is very spacious.. The displays are very neat. There is also some display of pupils' work. There is a very relaxed and congenial atmosphere in this class. The teacher who has followed the university training course as a mature student had taught for a few years before that at this same school as an untrained teacher.

At the start of the observation session the teacher is asking individual pupils to come out and write numbers on the blackboard. She questions them too about how many packets of tens they need for each number. After ten minutes of this the teacher presents the class with four story-sums in English on the blackboard. Each sum is written in a differently coloured chalk. Each colour corresponds to a different group of pupils. She starts the lesson by reading out loud the story-sums herself. Then she asks a pupil from the first group to read it out. Another pupil from the same group is asked to explain it in Maltese. Yet another pupil from the same group is asked to work out the story sum in question on the board. This routine takes place with all the four groups. Every time a pupil gets a sum right, the teacher asks the other pupils to applaud. The teacher's manner with the pupils is on the whole very caring and encouraging, especially when a pupil is working out a sum incorrectly. On one occasion when she commits an error she emphasises that even teachers make mistakes. Something which proves to be of continuous distraction throughout this activity and which demonstrates the huge amount of copybooks and text-books that even children of such a tender age have to lug about, is that every time most of the children shift out of their chairs, these would overturn with the weight of the bag strapped to the back of the chair. When asking questions the teacher takes great care to nominate both volunteers and non-volunteers. As opposed to most of the other teachers that are observed she uses the whole space of her classroom and not just the area next to her desk. This is followed by 25 minutes of activity songs in English, after which it is time for the mid-morning break.

During the mid-morning break the teacher ensures that the pupils have laid their tables properly to eat. The distribution of milk is seen as an opportunity to remind the pupils of terms like: 'full', 'half full', 'empty'. After the break the pupils are engaged for half an hour in free drawing activities. This is followed by an English Reading lesson. Some pupils are nominated to read in turn a short story from a set reader. Throughout, the teacher' s emphasis is on a proper understanding of the story.

This teacher claims that she had always wanted to go in for a teaching job. However, because she had first raised a family, she had been compelled to complete her 'A' levels as a mature student by taking evening classes. However she had been quite determined and had been very happy when she had been allowed to follow the university course as a mature student. She enjoys teaching the first year of the primary level as she recognises that this is where children obtain the basic concepts. This is also the first year of formal schooling and a big change from the kindergarten experience which is very informal. In her opinion much more needs to be done at kindergarten level in terms of pre-literacy skills. Also she would prefer increased collaboration with the other teachers of the school.

This teacher feels that this first year of regular teaching after the university course, as opposed to when she was an unqualified teacher, has helped her to gain a lot of self-confidence. She is now more confident about her teaching strategies and this has brought about better results in the children's performance. This has in turn earned her the respect of the parents, her teaching colleagues, the school administrators and the education officer. The head teacher does not intervene anymore as he used to when she was still untrained.

She feels that the psychology and sociology aspects of the university training course have helped her to understand her pupils better. The Methodology parts of the course have made her aware of different ways of presenting material. She feels that it is important for teachers to be given opportunities to keep abreast of educational innovation, especially that based on solid research. She has received a lot of emotional and moral support from her family. Sometimes, too, her husband helps with the production of teaching aids. She belongs also to an Alfred Adler Psychology group where teachers and others meet to exchange ideas. At school she has found the head and his assistant to be very supportive.

She finds the syllabus very relevant and adequate. She feels that given the right conditions there is no problem to cover all of it within the stipulated period of time. In her opinion when individuals complain of the syllabus it is a case of 'bad workmen blaming their tools'. In Year 1, written English is only introduced after Christmas. Now (in April) her pupils are already reading fairly well in English. She makes use of videos to help them with their reading. Also, they can already count up to 100. At the

beginning of the year they were not grouped but seated in a V shape, with half of the class facing the other. In her opinion, they then required a lot more individual attention than they do now and the emphasis then was on how to hold and manipulate a pencil. They needed to watch each other write and she needs to be able to go round the pupils easily in order to hold their hand when writing, etc.

Teacher 8

This is another Year 1 class with 20 pupils (ten boys and ten girls) in a school situated also in the south of the island. There are the usual charts, a shop corner and a few old and tattered books on a low table. The pupils are seated in a horseshoe format facing the front of the classroom since, according to the teacher, the pupils prefer this.

At the start of the observation session the teacher gives a class explanation of Maltese decimal currency by using a chart. Then she engages the pupils in a role-play activity at the shop corner with a boy acting as the shopkeeper and a girl as the salesgirl (sic!). As the plastic coins have been mislaid unifix cubes are used as currency. This causes a lot of confusion. The language used is in the main Maltese. However most of the mathematical terms are in English: 'total sum', 'altogether', change', etc. There is some confusion with similar sounding words (homonyms) in Maltese and English. Each role-played shopping transaction is worked out as a sum by the teacher and class on the board. It is said orally in Maltese, but written down in English. This activity is followed by a handout with sums, which the pupils have to complete. The teacher puts a lot of emphasis on the importance of being able to read and understand before they can work out the sums. The pupils are expected to work on their own and thus collaboration is discouraged. As they line up to show their work to the teacher she becomes increasingly frustrated as more of the pupils get them wrong. She threatens to keep them inside during the mid-day break so that they do them all over again..

After the mid-morning break there is a lesson in Maltese Conversation about 'The Garden'. This prompts the teacher to talk about the life-cycle of the cabbage white butterfly and the honey bee, the characteristics of insects and to condemn the practice of

bird-hunting. After a few minutes the teacher asks the pupils to suggest to her sentences about 'The Spider'. These, she writes on the board.

In the interview the teacher expresses helplessness over how to help a child in her class suffering from cerebral palsy. This child has a helper, whom she shares with a Down's Syndrome child in the kindergarten. As the days go by she has come to feel more positive about her teaching job. The environment of the school which she finds drab and the poor staff relationships have helped to increase her misery. She derives the greatest satisfaction from when the pupils are able to grasp new concepts. She does not like the pressure that the parents put on the head teacher to encourage a more 'academic' approach to teaching. She feels that she lacks proper training in the teaching of the more subject-specific areas of the syllabus, especially in English and Mathematics. Her relatives and other teachers are her main sources of support. In her opinion the syllabus is too broad and vague. It, however, allows the teacher to extend it further depending on the ability level of the pupils in one's class. She intends to keep on teaching Year 1 classes.

Teacher 9

In this Year 1 class there are 27 pupils (15 boys and 12 girls). There is a white board at the front of the classroom. The walls are bare. The pupils are very crammed in the classroom. There is a lot of noise coming from heavy plant machinery in the street which this classroom overlooks. Often the teacher has to raise her voice to be understood by the pupils as it is too hot to close the windows.

At the start of the observation session the teacher and the pupils are engaged in a class correction of the homework from the previous day for a few minutes. Then the teacher delivers a class presentation around the topic of shopping. This leads to an activity where the pupils are asked to estimate the weight of a number of consumer items. There is also an attempt to explain: 'more than', 'less than', and ' the same'. After this the teacher shows them how weighing scales work and then sets them some tasks

related to this. She does not monitor their work as there are only a few minutes left before the mid-morning break.

After the break it is time for a Maltese Comprehension session. She presents them with a story in Maltese and some related questions on a hand-out. There follows a discussion about the story, after which the pupils are set the task of writing down the answers to the questions.

In the interview the teacher claims to be very positive about her teaching (although she does not show it) and to enjoy relating to her pupils. She is very discouraged by unmotivated pupils. She feels that now after almost a year at it her teaching is very different from when she started. Now she has a more favourable relationship with her pupils. She feels that she needs help with how to deal with unmotivated pupils as she feels that she is fast running out of ideas about how to handle them. She does not receive support from anybody at all. In her opinion the syllabus is too vast. She intends to continue teaching at primary level.

The Classes

Class size

A maximum of thirty pupils is stipulated for any class in Malta. The number of pupils in the classes that were observed ranged from 19 to 30. The Year One classes tended to have the least number of pupils with the Year three classes having the larger number of pupils.

Classroom Environment

The classroom environment and arrangement varied from one case to the other. In some cases the walls were bare. In those classes which had charts, these were of the

traditional type, produced by the teacher. You see one in a classroom and you have seen them all: Symmetrical Shapes, Times-Tables, Verbs, etc. The Nature Table, the Reading Corner, the Shopping Corner were evidently there just for display. Most of the books are brought in by the pupils and are unwanted presents; in most cases too easy or too difficult for their reading ability. Large numbers of pupils were restricted in a limited area. For long hours they have to sit in small classes with drab paint work and decorations. Most of the time, especially in Summer when one cannot but open all the windows, the classroom gets really hot by 9 o'clock. Also there is a lot of noise coming from outside if the class looks over a street or the school yard.

Class Level Policies

All the subjects of the Primary school syllabus were covered by the teacher with the exception of Art & Craft and Music which are covered by peripatetic teachers who cover a number of schools within the same area. The visits by these peripatetic teachers are very irregular and vary tremendously from one school to the other. In fact in our group there were extremes. Three of the classes received visits from these teachers on an average of one visit every two months. Four of the schools received regular visits once a month. One of the classes had only one visit from each peripatetic teacher in eight months. The other class had not had any visits at all.

The Year Three classes were provided with a remedial teacher who was shared between two schools and who covered the basic subjects of Maltese, English and Mathematics. On the whole the system of remedial teaching operated on a withdrawal basis where a group of a maximum of five children are withdrawn to a room/cubicle which had been reserved solely for this purpose or which doubled a s the school doctor's clinic, library, deputy head teacher's office, etc.

Pupil Groupings

In eight of the nine classes observed, the children were seated in rows facing the front of the classroom where the teacher's desk and the blackboard are situated. In six of the classes the boys were separated from the girls. When the teachers were asked about the reasons for such a seating arrangement in their classroom they gave either 'no particular reason' or classroom discipline as their justification. In one of the classes the children were seated in a horseshoe format. Their teacher stated that this format was changeable as she took a very democratic stance and allowed her pupils to adopt their preferred format. However, again in this class collaborative work with peers was discouraged. In fact when this same teacher noticed that two children were discussing one of the sums that she had set them, she asked them to stop copying from each other.

In only one class were the pupils seated in four groups of four children each, with a slow-learner on his own in the middle of the classroom. However, even in this classroom there was no evidence of collaborative group work. When asked for the reasons for such an arrangement the teacher responded:

> 'At the beginning of the school year I seat them in a V shape format as they need to see each other working as they need to do a lot of imitation work at that stage. Now I have put them in groups so that I can easily go round them to listen to them reading or to hold their hand when writing as the emphasis now is on steady writing.'

The emphasis is on classroom management rather than collaborative group work.

Textbooks

The classes observed were supplied with free textbooks by the Department of Education. The Ladybird Reading Scheme (and its accompanying workbooks) and Pathways is used for the teaching of English, the 'Denfil' series for the teaching of Maltese and another series called 'Mathematics' and designed by the Department of Education for the teaching of Mathematics. There were also Department of Education

workbooks for the teaching of Environmental Science and guidelines for the teaching of Religion.

Materials and Resources

In the classes observed there was a dearth of materials and resources available to the teachers and pupils. What was available consisted mainly of scrap material which had been brought into the classroom by the teachers and the pupils. There was some materials like unifix cubes, scales, metre rulers, some reading books, etc. which were made available by the school to the teachers who were teaching the same level and could be shared out amongst them. When not in circulation these resources were kept under lock and key in the head teacher's office. This created some difficulties as the teachers of the same age-group were generally expected to be following the same subject areas as their colleagues. There was a lot of borrowing of materials from one lesson to the other. On several occasions the teachers stopped some time into the lesson to send out a child to retrieve some resource which was still with another teacher.

Planning

The teachers were interviewed about their planning strategies. The Maltese centralised schooling system does not allow the class teacher much freedom in terms of the type, amount and pace of the curriculum and syllabus. This is laid down by the central Department of Education and monitored by its Education Officers who attempt to ensure that the forecasts of teachers who are responsible for classes of the same age-level are very much the same. For most of these Education Officers the maintenance of standards means that all the children of the same age-level are taught in the same way and cover the same curricular content. This ensures a way of teaching which conforms to the type of assessments and examinations that these pupils will be faced with in later life. First Year Teachers are especially prone to the influence of the Education Officers as they are visited regularly by them in order to obtain their efficiency bar. A common

comment of these First Year Teachers is that they often have to employ strategies which are intended to satisfy the education officer, although they themselves do not believe in them. They hope that as they gain more experience they will gain the confidence of the Education Officers and especially their heads and be left to their own devices. Then they will be in a position to run things in a way that they believe in and not have to engage in strategies which are intended solely to keep their superiors happy.

Preparation time

The nine teachers were asked how much time they spent preparing work each week. Two of the teachers said that they spent from six to ten hours per week. Three of them claimed they spent from one to five hours per week. The remaining four claimed that they spent less than one hour per week. It is interesting to note that the four teachers who claimed that they spent less than one hour preparing work each week were the ones who felt least competent from the whole group.

Assessment and Record Keeping

The teachers were asked too about the kind of assessment procedures that they used. Most of the assessment carried out by the teachers in the classrooms took the form of tests drawn up by the teacher herself in the form of a set of exercises which covered some subject areas which had just been covered. In fact six of the teachers that were observed conducted these in their classrooms. Some immediate and general feedback was provided to the pupils about their performance on these tests. However, there was no evidence of any follow up strategy to provide remedial help to individual children. General areas of weakness were dealt with by the teacher on a whole class basis. There was no evidence that these were dealt with on an individual basis. No record of the students' performance on these tests was kept or any action plan for individual children decided upon. The only record-keeping which takes place in the Maltese primary classroom and which is stipulated by the central Department of Education is what is called the Cumulative Record Card which is filled up by the

teacher for every child in the classroom at the end of each scholastic year. This is a teacher-subjective assessment based on a scale A to E for the subject areas and some aspects of development. Throughout the year these cards are held in the head teacher's office and are presented to the respective teacher at the very end of the scholastic year before the start of the summer holidays. Although they may view the Cumulative Record Cards throughout the year, in actual fact most teachers only get to do this at the end of the year when it is their turn to fill them up.

The First Year Teachers that we interviewed (two months before the end of the scholastic year) had never seen these cards and were not sure as to what these were. Only two of them had heard about the existence of such Record Cards.

Physical layout of classrooms

In all the classes that were observed there was a traditional layout with pupils seated in rows, facing the blackboard and teacher's desk. The same range of charts, presenting times-tables, shapes, poems and songs were hanging on the wall of each class. There was also a weather-chart and an achievement chart. Stars or points were earned on the basis of academic achievement or good behaviour, as it took the teacher's fancy.

There was very little evidence of children's work. In those few classes where teachers bothered to display pupils' work, this consisted of mobiles hanging from the ceiling made up of cut-out paper figures of robins and painted by the pupils. We were later informed that these paper cut-out figures had been provided to the classes by the members of the Education Section of the Malta Ornithological Society. When the pieces of pupils' writing were displayed these consisted of impeccable examples of grammatically correct sentences about a topic which was set to the whole of the class as the same theme was repeated in each exemplar of 'good' writing.

Forecasts and Timetables

All the teachers that were observed were expected by their head teachers and the Education Officers to prepare weekly forecasts of their work and a time-table (planned over a week) which they were to follow throughout the year. It was expected that the forecasts and timetables of the First Year Teachers were to be very similar to the other teachers in their school who taught the same age group.

In the Junior School Project (Mortimore *et al*, 1988) 46 per cent of teachers said they produced a written forecast. Only a minority of the teachers said that they discussed their forecasts with their head teachers.

Teachers in state primary schools are expected to follow a weekly timetable of lessons as stipulated by the central Department of Education. Although the lessons and amount of time spent on each subject is pre-determined, it does allow for some flexibility as to what time certain subjects are slotted. It is expected that the first half hour of each day is taken up with Religious Education, based on Notes issued by the Department of Education. This is followed by an hour of Mathematics, based on the set text-book. After the mid-morning break one hour is taken up with either Maltese or English. It is expected that there are lessons in Conversation and Vocabulary, Reading and Writing for both Maltese and English, every week. These language lessons are normally derived from the set readers and text-books in Maltese and English. It is up to the teacher to decide when to slot these as long as the required amount of time is covered. The afternoon sessions of the week are generally taken up by Social Studies (which incorporates Civics, History and Geography), Science, Art and Craft, Physical Education, Art & Craft and Music. Some of the lessons for Music and Art and Craft are taken by peripatetic special teachers. The frequency of lessons in these subjects depends on the availability of these specialised teachers, on whether the school has a school choir or not and on the immanence of a school concert or prize-giving ceremony. Up to Year 3 there are also sessions in Handwriting. Here follows an example of a weekly time table from one of the Year 3 teachers observed in this study.

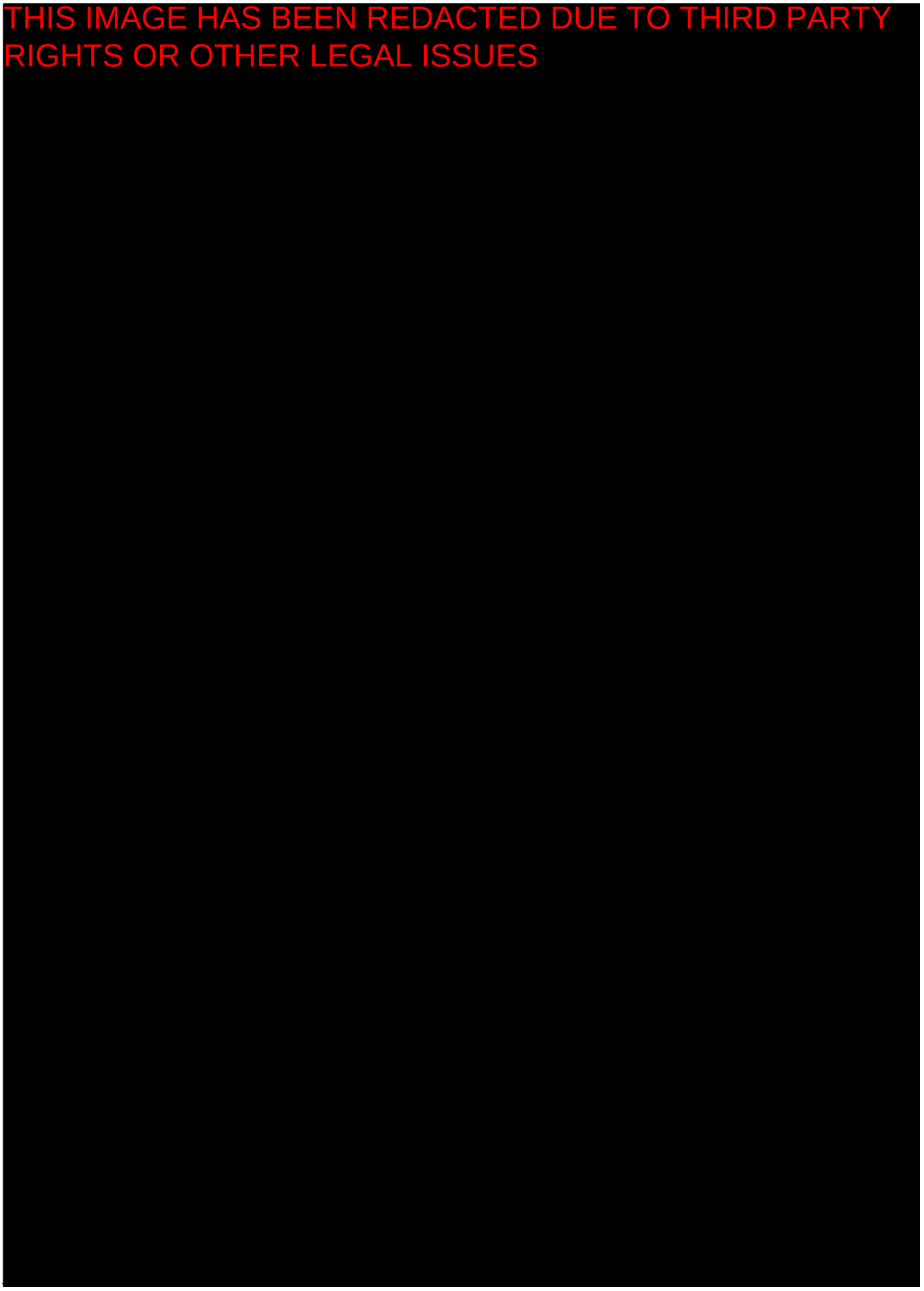
Figure A1 An Example of a Weekly Class Time-table of a Maltese Primary state school

	Monday	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**
8.30 am-9.00 am	Religion	Religion	Religion	Religion	Religion
9.00 am-10.00 am	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
10.00 am-10.30 am	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
10.30 am-11.00 am	English Conversation	Maltese Conversation	English Vocabulary	Maltese Vocabulary	General Science
11.00 am-11.30 am	English Reading	Maltese Reading	English Writing	Maltese Writing	
11.30 am-12.00 am	English Poetry	Maltese Poetry			Handwriting
12.00 am-12. 30 pm	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1.00 pm-1.30 pm	History	Civics	Geography	Physical Education	Homework
1.30 pm-2.00 pm					Art & Craft/ Music
2.00 pm-2.30 pm	Homework*	Homework	Homework	Homework	

* Homework is a very important aspect of Maltese classrooms. Each day substantial periods of the school day are taken up by the setting and correction of homework to the whole class, especially in language and number work. Teachers spend long hours during school hours and outside of them marking children's homework. Often teachers are sized up by parents according to the amount of homework that they set to their children. In the Junior Schools Project (Mortimore *et al*, 1988) only two fifths of teachers said that they never gave homework, although some were asked for homework by both children and parents. Of the 52 teachers who did set it, 38 per cent said they did so once a week and 31 per cent said they set work only occasionally. Fifty teachers described the areas in which homework was set. These included spelling, mathematics and reading. Thirty five teachers stated that any homework set would be for all the children, whereas nine said they would set homework by groups, and seven gave it for a minority only.

Appendix VII Coding Schedules for the Classroom Study:
A) Teachers' Use of Time
B) Teachers' Feedback Patterns

Appendix VII A) Teachers' Use of Time Coding Schedule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Appendix VII B) Teachers' Feedback Patterns Coding Schedule

STUDENT SEX			STUDENT RESPONSE				TEACHER FEEDBACK REACTION									
NO.	M	F	+	±		0	++	+	0	—	– –	GIVES ANS.	ASKS OTHER	OTHER CALLS	RE-PEATS	CLUE	NEW QUES.
1																	
2																	
3																	
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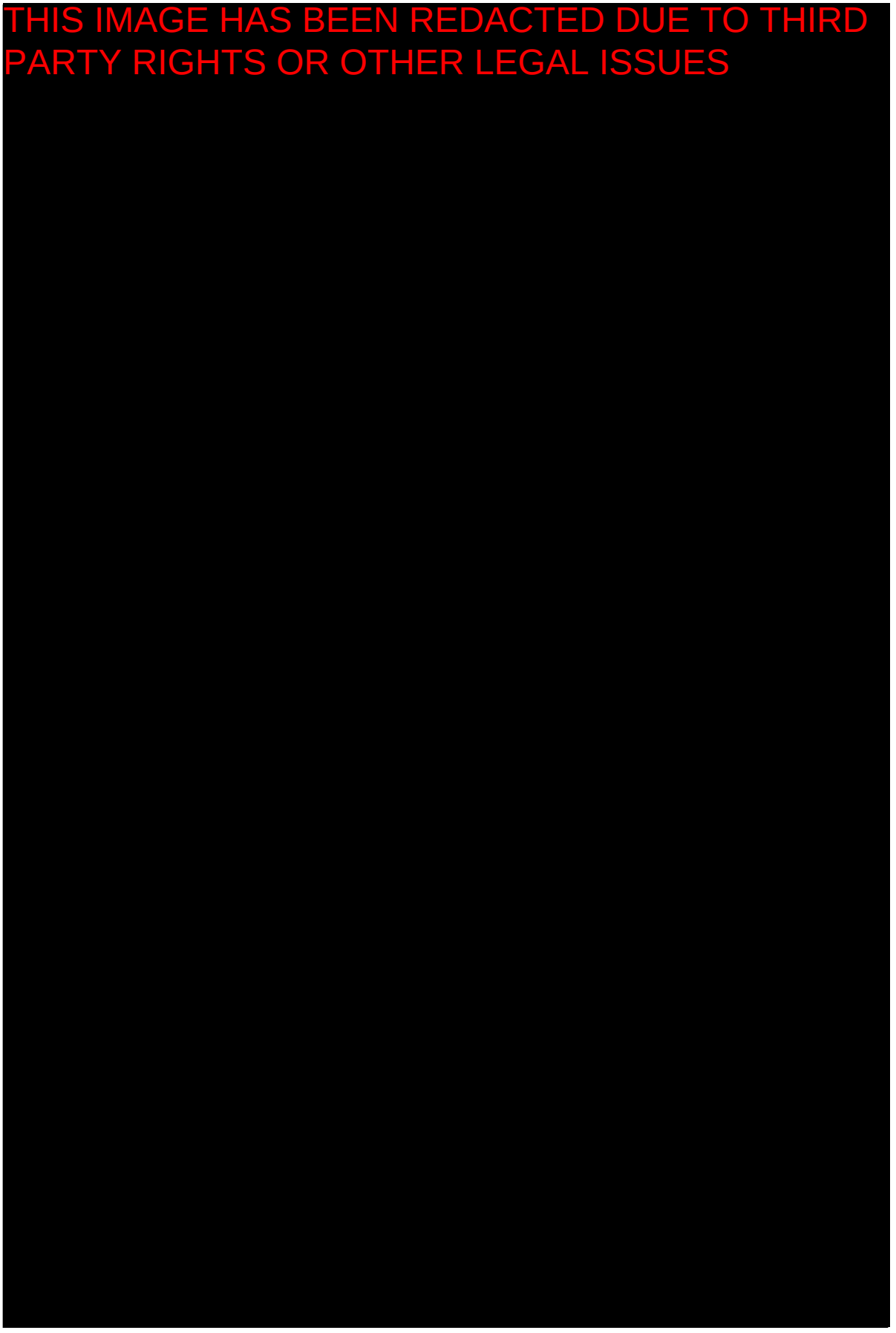
(from Good & Brophy, 1984)



(from Good & Brophy, 1984)